

INDIAN YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

OVERSIGHT HEARING ON CHALLENGES CONFRONTING AMERICAN
INDIAN YOUTH

MAY 26, 1999
WASHINGTON, DC



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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 1999

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in room 485, Senate Russell Building, Hon. Ben Nighthorse Campbell (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Campbell, Inouye, Wellstone, and Murkowski.

STATEMENT OF HON. BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL, U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. The Indian Affairs Committee will come to order.

This morning we will hear from our witnesses about what is, in reality, the future of Native America, and that is the challenges facing Native American youth; and, more importantly, the response and initiatives from Indian country that are being proposed to counter the many problems facing our young people.

More than any other committee in Congress, this committee is called on to identify the core economic and social problems holding Native Americans back from achieving the American dream. Most Americans will never have to face the kind or degree of problems that Indian America confronts every day: stagnant economies, poor health, substance abuse, and a host of other obstacles. I know from my own childhood that I experienced a number of those, and I think that's not uncommon. Broken homes, alcoholism, unemployment, prejudice, hopelessness are all too common in Indian country, and yet in the greatest Nation in the world.

Last year we held hearings on juvenile justice, gangs, and the response of the Federal Government to provide more law enforcement resources. This was—and is still—a needed response. At the same time, we must look to positive developments and role models that are shining beacons for millions of Native youngsters around the Nation.

Although there is a role for Government, our witnesses today will show us that the answer to these problems lies not in this committee, or with the BIA, but in the hearts and minds of Indian people themselves. Today we will hear from some of those beacons of hope that are helping our youngsters become entrepreneurs, tribal leaders, good citizens, and acclaimed athletes. I am particularly happy

to see Dan Lewis with us here today; he worked on this committee for a number of years with Senator McCain.

Dan, it is nice to have you back.

With that, since Senator Inouye is not here yet, we will go ahead and start with Dominic Nessi, the Acting Director of the Office of Economic Development for the Bureau of Indian Affairs [BIA].

Dom, if you would like to go ahead and start? The complete testimony of all of the witnesses will be included in the record, and you may abbreviate.

STATEMENT OF DOMINIC NESSI, ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. NESSI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will summarize it.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am pleased to be here today to discuss Native American youth activities and initiatives within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs and the BIA. Assistant Secretary Gover unfortunately could not be here today because he is in Minnesota, meeting with tribal governments. He did ask me to convey his appreciation for the committee's efforts in highlighting youth issues, and to emphasize his strong commitment to doing whatever it takes to assist in nurturing a better environment for our future generations.

Each day we read the many reports that catalog issues facing Indian youth, Indian families, and Indian communities. On-reservation poverty and unemployment are the highest in the Nation. One in 25 Indians, age 18 and older, is under the jurisdiction of a criminal justice system. The reported incidence of child maltreatment in Indian communities has risen 18 percent, while the rate fell nationwide. The arrest rate among American Indians for alcohol-related offenses is double that of all other races.

Despite the odds, tribal leaders, Indian students, teachers, and community volunteers are working to change these statistics. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs is encouraging tribes to duplicate successful tribal initiatives, like the program of the Winnebago of Nebraska that puts troubled youth to work with the bison herd, as well as community-based substance abuse prevention, gang-resistance education, and training, mentoring, and restitution programs.

Assistant Secretary Gover is particularly excited about working with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. He has witnessed their incredible rise from one club in 1993 to 46 clubs, today. The sincere and determined commitment of the Boys and Girls Clubs to Indian youth is very exciting, and we look forward to a long and successful partnership with them.

In that regard, the BIA has recently launched a program with Boys and Girls Clubs of America to start new clubs on 30 reservations and BIA schools. We recognize that a lack of proper facilities is one of the most difficult barriers that Indian communities face when starting a Boys and Girls Club, and we are hopeful that this partnership will assist the Boys and Girls Clubs in reaching their goal of 100 clubs by the end of the year 2000.

We continue to remain open to other suggestions on how we can partner with Boys and Girls Clubs. We look forward to working

with them and the chairman of their Native American Advisory Committee, Dan Lewis.

Assistant Secretary Gover is also a strong supporter of UNITY and the work that J.R. Cook is doing, and we will continue to support the important activities that they are undertaking in the area of Indian youth leadership.

The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans, and the Director of the Indian Health Service have recently joined together to sponsor a National Indian Youth Conference entitled, "Youth First: The Future of Indian America, Planting the Seeds of Culture and Knowledge." The conference will be held June 2-4 in Denver, CO. Not only will the conference provide Indian youth with leadership skills, but it will address health, wellness, education, and identity issues facing today's Indian youth. The conference also offers adult volunteers an opportunity to learn more about the national resources available to assist communities in developing initiatives for youth.

The goal of the Assistant Secretary is to create a forum in which tribal organizations and representatives can build local partnerships with national youth organizations, such as UNITY, WINGS of America, Visible Horizons, Indian Youth of America, the Native American Sports Council, and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

This is also a collaborative effort of Federal agencies, tribal leaders, and national Indian organizations with a single vision, to expand the resources available to local communities so that the people who know the needs of their communities have the tools to develop opportunities for their young people. The end result of this conference will be a network for national youth organizations which focuses on the development of community-based capacity programs. It will identify national youth organizations working in Indian country, the activities and services that they bring to communities, and how they compliment one another. Most importantly, it will provide national youth organizations a forum in which to help youth and adult community leaders develop a national strategy to address Indian youth concerns and issues.

Mr. Chairman, we hope to chronicle some of the concerns and issues that I raised during this conference and bring them back to this committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. NESSI. This event is also being held in partnership with another event which I have personally been involved with for the past 14 years, which is the Native American Youth Weekend. This event also features an educational wellness and leadership program, and features a nationally-recognized basketball tournament for Indian boys and girls.

Mr. Chairman, we were honored with your presence at this event 12 years ago, when you spoke to the attendees. While we are disappointed that your busy schedule prevents you from attending this year, your efforts on behalf of Indian youth will not go unrecognized by the attendees at both events.

In March, Assistant Secretary Gover launched the Youth Alcohol Traffic Safety Plan, a cooperative program between the BIA and the Navajo Nation. The goal of the program is to eliminate the

leading cause of injury and death for the age group of 1 through 24 in Indian country, which is alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents, by redirecting unproductive behavior and reducing the incidence of impaired driving. The plan is an aggressive approach to alcohol, drugs, and impaired driving that includes mandatory school curricula, DWI checkpoints across the Navajo reservation, and billboards with the program's slogan, translated as "Liquor No."

The BIA is also working to establish a multi-disciplinary governmentwide initiative to address crime, substance abuse, health, and education in Indian country. This initiative builds on the community-based planning used by the Office of Law Enforcement Services to design juvenile detention programs. In collaboration with Federal agencies, the community evaluates the problem, develops appropriate resources, and designs programs to effect positive change. Rather than separate unrelated Federal initiatives, community-based planning encourages tribal-Federal partnerships.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of other initiatives within the Bureau that are outlined in the testimony which was submitted for the record, and we would be happy to answer any questions that you might have on any of those.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Nessi appears in appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Inouye.

Senator INOUE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to join you in welcoming Mr. Nessi and to thank him for all the time and hours he has spent in helping Native Hawaiians.

The CHAIRMAN. Dom, you mentioned something that went by me a little bit fast. What was that 18 percent figure that you mentioned in your testimony?

Mr. NESSI. The reported incidence of child maltreatment in Indian communities has risen 18 percent, while the rate fell nationwide.

The CHAIRMAN. Also you mentioned the arrest rates doubling. Is there a correlation between increase of gang activity on reservations, and that arrest rate? Do you have any figures on that?

Mr. NESSI. I do have some figures on gangs. There was a roundtable held by the Native American Law Enforcement Roundtable Conference last year at which 132 tribes reported the existence of 375 gangs and 4,652 gang members in Indian country. While there are not exact percentages, it does state that the number of gangs and gang members is increasing at an alarming rate in Indian country.

The CHAIRMAN. The growth of the gangs—Senator Hatch and I held some hearings on gangs, and as I remember, there was some correlation between the growth of gangs on reservations and the proximity to metropolitan areas. It seemed like the inner city gangs were actually recruiting on the reservations, the ones that are close. Have you found that in your studies, too?

Mr. NESSI. Senator, over the past few years we have seen a high incidence of that, particularly in Arizona on the reservations that surround the Phoenix area. A lot of gang activity will spill over into the Indian communities.

But I don't think there is any reservation that is not touched by it now, because you see it on TV and you hear it in the music and elsewhere.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Inouye, did you have any questions?

Senator INOUE. Yes, I do.

I note in your testimony that you are initiating a multi-disciplinary program involving IHS, BIA, and ANA. It's a good program. Why did we take so long in putting one together like that? It seems logical.

Mr. NESSI. Well, Senator, I really couldn't answer that question because I've only been at the Bureau for 1 year. I do know that Assistant Secretary Gover has made Indian youth one of the cornerstones of his administration, and was very supportive of the suggestion to pull together a National Youth Summit which we hope is not just an event for this year, but a permanent event, where we can bring Indian youth and Indian youth organizations together every year.

We are really pleased with the support from Commissioner Kimball and Dr. Trujillo to work on this event. Many other Federal agencies have indicated their strong desire to cooperate in next year's event.

Senator INOUE. Is this summit the conference that will convene in Denver next week?

Mr. NESSI. Yes, sir.

Senator INOUE. On substance abuse, alcohol, and drugs, is it getting worse? Or is it improving?

Mr. NESSI. It appears from the statistics, Senator, that it is getting worse, and that prevention—I should say deterrent—effects, such as more law enforcement and jails, is not always the answer, that such organizations as UNITY and Boys and Girls Clubs are probably the solution to this. Alcoholism tends to take place in the absence of other, better activities, and organizations that can provide better activities, such as the two I've mentioned and others I mentioned earlier, seem to be the key to saving youth from those kinds of activities.

Senator INOUE. What about the suicide rate among Indian youth? Is it getting worse?

Mr. NESSI. Senator, I couldn't tell you in terms of whether the rate is going up or not. I do know that the University of Minnesota did a study about 6 years ago, and as I remember the statistics off the top of my head, they were alarming for Indian youth in terms of the suicide rate compared to non-Indians. If I remember, it was almost five times higher.

Senator INOUE. I recall 10 years ago, young men between the ages of 18 and 23 in Alaska, Native Alaskans, had a suicide rate of 14 times the national average, the national norm. I was just wondering if those numbers have gotten worse.

I would appreciate some statistics, if you have those.

Mr. NESSI. Yes, Senator.

Senator INOUE. I would like to congratulate you on the work that you and the Bureau are doing. We hope that your work will bear fruit.

Mr. NESSI. I will convey that to Assistant Secretary Gover.

The CHAIRMAN. One last question. As you know, there are many sources of funding that go to alcohol and drug programs, and of course, that's certainly related to a lot of the problems that our youngsters are having. The Bureau has its source of funding; Justice does; HUD does, and so on. We are drafting a bill that would try to consolidate the Federal drug and alcohol programs for Indian country. Is that the kind of thing you think the Bureau would support?

Mr. NESSI. I think Assistant Secretary Gover would be very supportive of that effort.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Thank you, and thank you for appearing.

Mr. NESSI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The next panel will be Manne Lasiloo, co-president of the United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc.; Delwyn Holthusen, a student leader from the Red Lake Band of Chippewas; Paula Healy, president, National American Indian Business Leaders Board; Notah Begay, who is a professional golfer and a member of the PGA; and our friend, Dan Lewis, senior vice president of the Native American Financial Services Bank, Bank of America.

As I mentioned before, we use this light system. I notice that some of the testimony is very voluminous. I have read a good deal of it myself, and staff has, too. All that testimony will be included in the record and reviewed by all the members, but you might abbreviate your comments, and this light will remind you.

We will go ahead and start with Mr. Lasiloo.

STATEMENT OF MANNE LASILOO, CO-PRESIDENT, UNITED NATIONAL INDIAN TRIBAL YOUTH [UNITY], INC., ACCOMPANIED BY J.R. COOK, PRESIDENT, UNITY, INC., OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

Mr. LASILOO. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Before I get started this morning I would just like to recognize my tribal council: Councilman Philbert Soroquisara and Councilman Chris Mendoza; also, members of the UNITY Trustee Board, Jan English, Wilson Pipestem, J.R. Cook, Greg Mendoza, and also a member of our Youth Council, Michael Preston.

And with that, I will go ahead and get started.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Manne Lasiloo, and I currently serve as the co-president of the United National Indian Tribal Youth Council, which is based in Oklahoma City, OK. I am a 19-year-old student, majoring in political science at Mesa Community College in Arizona. I am an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community of Sacaton, Arizona, and I am honored to have the opportunity to represent UNITY this morning.

This hearing is very timely in many ways. Our young people in this country are in a crisis. Although many of you know the abysmal health and social statistics that exist in many of our communities, this morning I would like to share with you some of the positive things that are happening in our communities.

As the co-president of the National UNITY Council and a past president of the Akimel O'odham Pee-Posh Youth Council, I have

had the privilege of being a part of great change. Beginning with my involvement in my community, and now at the national level through UNITY, there has been significant growth in the number of programs and partnerships that have been built. It is from this perspective that I would like to present my testimony.

As I was preparing my testimony for this hearing, I was thinking about all of the programs that I have been involved with over the past few years and all of the events and conferences where I have learned many things. What has been most important is not what has been accomplished, but rather why I became involved in my community, with my peers, and now with UNITY.

When I was younger, many of the things I did weren't very productive. If it were not for the guidance of the Youth Council, I would not be before you here today. During my early high school years I was doing things such as throwing rocks at semi-trailer trucks, searching for my identity, and wasting my potential. Most of these activities were mischievous, but at that age I knew no better.

As the years passed, I grew tired of searching for a sense of belonging or identity. I am sure that many of you at one point have also searched for a sense of belonging and identity. More importantly, I grew tired of watching my people slowly become victims of circumstance. At the age of 14 I lost a close friend to gang violence; he was beaten to death by a group of local gang members. Mr. Chairman, this is where I came to a crossroads in my life and the point where I got involved with my Youth Council.

Not only did the Youth Council provide me with my first job, it was also instrumental in bringing the first Boys and Girls Club to a reservation in Arizona. Ironically, one of the themes of the club was "to provide a sense of belonging." I embraced this sense of belonging and became an active member. To my amazement, within my first year I was selected as the first "Youth of the Year" of the Gila River Boys and Girls Club.

Since then I have had the privilege to work with the people in my community who have shared a common vision of how young people like myself can be involved. The activities and programs of the Youth Council have become a model for many programs through UNITY. Our many Youth Council programs include Gila River Kids Voting, which is responsible for bringing out many community youth and encouraging them to bring out their parents and vote in the poll elections as well; and Gila River Close-Up, which is responsible for teaching the differences about tribal education and the Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, the work of the Youth Council fosters community awareness and community involvement. We are also developing greater partnerships with our neighboring communities and State and Federal agencies. These include—but hopefully are not limited to—the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Justice, Department of Health and Human Services, the Indian Health Service, and the Corporation for National Service.

For all the youths that have been involved with the Youth Council, including myself, we have shared in many accomplishments that have brought great personal satisfaction. As the co-president

of UNITY Council, selected by my peers last July, I would say that many of the programs that I have been involved with in my community could not have been successful without the supporting guidance from UNITY. UNITY serves as a national support group for the activities of the Indian Youth Councils across the country.

The purpose of UNITY is to serve as a national network to promote personal development, citizenship, and leadership. While there are several initiatives that UNITY is currently developing, I would like to speak about two new programs that I believe have great promise.

The Tribal Government Initiative, "Engaging Youth in Tribal Government"—the purpose of this program is to develop a national awareness campaign to reach a broad range of Indian young people through the creation of a youth for tribal government program. It is our goal to establish a minimum of 85 programs in UNITY-affiliated Youth Councils and schools. To date, we have received funding from the administration for Native Americans to coordinate a 2-year project which will initially have five participating tribes. The project will commence at the upcoming National UNITY Conference in Denver, Colorado on June 25, 1999. At this time I would like to extend an invitation to each committee member to attend this conference.

The National Fitness Initiative, "Celebrate Fitness"—UNITY is committed to launching a national fitness campaign for American Indians and Alaska Natives where the Youth Councils will serve as a catalyst for implementing this program. "Celebrate Fitness" will promote physical activity, sound nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. To date, both the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Education Association have adopted resolutions supporting our initiative. We hope to involve all 178 Youth Councils in 34 States that are affiliated with UNITY to promote and adopt fitness initiatives.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I sit before you honored to tell you the story of my community and that of UNITY. I hope that my generation and those that follow will have many more opportunities to succeed. That is my vision. However, I know that this cannot occur unless we have the support of the leaders of this country.

We respectfully request the committee to consider the following recommendations.

You have the power to appropriate money earmarked for many of these initiatives, and we would like your support in ensuring that these programs succeed. In addition, we ask for your support in providing greater direction and coordination among the Federal agencies under your jurisdiction, to emphasize development of youth-related programs.

We ask for your support and funding for the Indian Youth Initiative being developed through the Indian Health Service.

Most importantly, there is a great need for financial support for national nonprofit Native American organizations. We ask for your support for national programs like UNITY, which serve as a vehicle for the collection of data and information and serve as a "think tank" to develop a national framework to address issues facing Indian youth.

At this time I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for allowing me this time, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Lasiloo appears in appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I think what we will do is take the testimony of everyone before we ask some questions.

Delwyn Holthusen, why don't you go ahead.

**STATEMENT OF DELWYN HOLTHUSEN, STUDENT LEADER,
RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS, RED LAKE, MN, AC-
COMPANIED BY BOBBY WHITEFEATHER, TRIBAL CHAIRMAN**

Mr. HOLTHUSEN. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Indian Affairs. Thank you for the honor of being invited to testify here today. My name is Delwyn E. Holthusen, Jr. I am an enrolled member of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa. We reside on our aboriginal homeland in what is now north central Minnesota. I am accompanied here today by my tribal chairman, Bobby Whitefeather.

I was told that your interest in having me testify is to hear from American Indian youth about the issues which confront us. I have spent all my life on the Red Lake Reservation. I went to elementary school in the village of Ponemah, the most traditional area of the reservation. I will be graduating from Red Lake High School on June 2, 1999, and I will be attending college at Minot State University in North Dakota this fall. My father has been a police officer, a logger, and a fisherman. My mother is an organizer and has worked for our tribal social services and now works for the Red Lake School District. My parents have supported me throughout my life and they taught me to dream. I have four sisters and one brother.

Toward the end of my elementary school days, I discovered basketball. I was selected to play on the varsity team while still an eighth-grader, along with my classmate, Gerald Kingbird. We led our team to the sub-regional championship four times and into the State tournament three times. When we played Wabasso, Minnesota in the 1997 semifinals, our teams broke 11 State records for points scored.

I have been fortunate in having many opportunities to interact with my teammates in a sort of brotherhood which has eliminated any thought of gang-like behavior. As an American Indian, it has been good for me to get to know players of opposing teams and to be able to see them as individuals and not as racial stereotypes. For the past two summers I have traveled with the Minnesota Select Team, which is comprised of the best high school basketball players in the State. This has been a real learning experience for me and has given me the chance to make many new friends.

I have also been fortunate to be considered a leader by my peers, who have elected me to the student council throughout high school. There is a certain pressure in being seen as a role model, but it is something that I try to live up to. Being asked for my autograph by elementary school students makes me conscious that my example means something to them.

Along with this, I serve on the recently-formed Youth Advisory Committee to the Red Lake Tribal Council. Consisting of 20 students from grades 5 through 12, the committee has been formed to advise the tribal council on matters of particular concern to young people. We are dealing with establishing incentives for various educational achievements now, and will be working on a variety of other issues. This is a valuable way for us to learn about our tribal operations and the government-to-government relationship between the tribes and the Federal Government. Whenever there have been major initiatives in our tribe, there has been a deliberate effort to find out where the youth stand on the issues. We appreciate having this input.

I have also had the mentorship of my tribal chairman in getting me involved in national Indian politics through the National Congress of American Indians Youth Track. I have attended several of these conferences as a youth representative of the Red Lake Band; in fact, at the last NCAI conference I attended in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, I chose to attend the adult track for many sessions.

It is encouraging to me that a committee such as yours is interested in the lives of American Indian youth. The world is becoming more and more complicated, as we see all the negative influences which are surrounding us. We need adults who are willing to deal with things as they are, not as they used to be. We need examples of morality and integrity to guide us. We need to know the strength of our culture and the values imparted through it. We need funding for activities and programs—not necessarily only for our recreation, but for positive outlets for our interests and talents. I have experienced the success that goes with athletics, but other talents need to be recognized, as well. We need to be taught to give, as well as to receive. We need excellence in our education to ensure that we can compete in today's world. We need government at all levels whose policies are geared to strengthening families. Our tribes need support in accelerating economic development so that we have the option of staying on our homeland and being able to make a living, if we so choose.

My life has been blessed with all the support I have received from my parents, my family, my community, and my tribe. Every person should have the benefit of being believed in and the challenge of having expectations to live up to. I have known for years that people expected me to do my best, and this has spurred my efforts. As an American Indian youth, I am proud of my heritage and will continue to keep the connections to the past as we move into the future. I have been taught to dream and to do the work necessary to make those dreams come true.

Thank you for your attention and for all your good work for American Indian youth. I will be glad to answer any questions.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Holthusen appears in appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. We will get to the questions when we finish.

Ms. Healy, why don't you proceed.

STATEMENT OF PAULA HEALY, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN BUSINESS LEADERS STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD, ACCOMPANIED BY DAVE ARCHAMBEAULT, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN BUSINESS LEADERS, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA AT MISSOULA

Ms. HEALY. Good morning, Honorable Chairman Campbell and other members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. I present my testimony myself in an honorable and respectful way.

My name is Paula Healy, and I am an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe of South Dakota, but presently I am living on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Montana. I am attending the New Hampshire College Graduate School, pursuing a Masters degree in Community and Economic Development. I am here today to discuss the merits of the American Indian Business Leaders. I am representing the members of our organization as the president of the National Student Advisory Board.

I would love to tell you more about the future, the growth, the history, and all the other particular significant information about AIBL, but they have been provided to you in the supplemental materials. I would like to limit my remarks to what I believe is most important to the future of American Indians.

I am very proud of being an American Indian, of our culture and our heritage, and I have chosen to stay and live on the reservation with people and a culture that I can identify with, as being close to my own. I am very happy to have the opportunity to live on the reservation.

There are many other Native Americans across the United States who also choose to stay and live on reservations. We share the same pride in our culture, in our traditions, our people, and our land. But it is very hard to be proud to be an Indian when everything in your surroundings is not so pretty.

I have learned firsthand of many obstacles facing our people. Life is very harsh in Indian country and can wear you down if you do not find a way to cope, and I have found a way to cope. The only way is through hope. I pray that other Native American youth can also find a reason to dream of a better future for themselves, and I believe in my heart that if our people are to survive, our youth will need to have a better outlook on life.

Our customs, traditions, and values are very precious to us, and I am very happy that we can hold on to these when other people have not. But there is one thing that we have lost, and that is our historic economical system. We have lost our ability to sustain ourselves, and this was lost with the disappearance of the buffalo in the early part of this century. Today that loss has led us to live in a life of poverty in an economic system that we know very little about. We rely on a welfare system which is impossible to overcome within the required two years. Despair and poverty are what face our youth daily.

Our culture, as beautiful as it is, cannot change the unemployment rates and the conditions on our reservations. In the past, every member of our tribe held their own positions, contributing their knowledge to the well-being of the overall tribe, each person giving and being part of the whole.

Today, self-worth and self-esteem are slowly disappearing in our people. This leaves a void which is, more often than not, filled by alcoholism, drug abuse, deteriorating health problems, and—sadly—suicide. All these factors are a direct result of our tribal economic conditions.

My people will become but a memory if we do not turn these bleak economic conditions around in our homelands. Today there are many different and fine Native American organizations—the ones that are here with me today, including the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. All of these organizations have made strides and advances for the betterment of Indians and Indian education. Their accomplishments are significant and illustrate that a shift is possible. But an educated individual cannot be effective if they do not have a job to go to or a career path to follow when they come home. Usually there are no positions available for well-educated Indians on reservations, so they leave and go to where the work is, which is a lost resource to our tribes.

Terrible as these conditions may sound, we are resilient people and it is not the end of the trail for us. I believe there is a way to overcome, and the American Indian Business Leaders has shown me a concrete way of doing this.

During my education I have found and been united with other dedicated individuals who have committed their efforts to this organization and the values it supports, and our mission statement is, "The loss of our national treasury and heritage is at hand. The beautiful customs, traditions, and values of the American Indian citizens could be but pages in the history books by the end of the 21st century."

The economic viability of Indian people in their homelands will determine this fate. The American Indian Business Leaders [AIBL] recognizes this dilemma. We will face this challenge by planting seeds of self-sufficiency with culturally-appropriate economic development in our youth and students through utilizing their creativity and resources to address the future well-being of American Indian people. AIBL offers a vision of hope to those who dare to dream.

The AIBL has been in existence for a few years now, and the organization is designed to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit by encouraging chapters, as well as individuals, to participate in activities and offer opportunities through participation. Right now, AIBL is primarily felt on college-level campuses, although in the past year we have been able to organize high school chapters, and our leadership at the program level has developed programs for children in elementary and secondary schools.

The basic premise is that our youth need exposure to fundamental economic concepts in grades K–12. As students advance in grade level, the activities will become more complex. I believe that the younger that youth are taught about these concepts, the more they will retain about these concepts, and they will begin to formulate ideas of their own.

Redirecting our youth's activities and energies to more positive and more culturally-appropriate activities can overshadow the problems in our homelands. The introduction of problem-solving techniques and critical thinking will allow youth the opportunity to

witness their accomplishments, in combination with other people's contributions, as changes being effected in their own communities. This supports a cultural tradition of sharing and generosity which is paramount in AIBL's philosophy.

AIBL also provides the means to become successful, increasing our skills through leadership training and culturally-appropriate career development activities. This is great news for Indian country if these programs can be encouraged and supported.

I believe that there can be a major impact in Indian country if AIBL's Youth Initiative is supported.

In addition to placing money in prevention, counselling, or recreation for youth, I think planting the seeds of an economic revolution would be an investment in the future of American Indian people. Let's see what our own youth can do to create business and economic solutions that face Indian country and America today, and this is what the root of our hearing is about today.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Healy appears in appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. We're going to have to move on, Ms. Healy. We have a time thing here because we have a definite amount of time for this hearing.

But I did notice with interest—I read most of your testimony; it is very well written and well presented; you obviously put some thought into it before you came here, and we appreciate it. We will get back to you with some questions.

Ms. HEALY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Why don't we go on with Mr. Begay.

By the way, Mr. Begay, have you ever heard of a Wintun Indian by the name of Rod Curl?

Mr. BEGAY. Yes; actually, we were together last weekend in Fort Worth.

The CHAIRMAN. Does he still play?

Mr. BEGAY. Yes; he's playing. He's teaching in Atlanta right now. He works with a lot of corporate people, teaching them golf and whatever.

The CHAIRMAN. Before we take your testimony, I wanted to give Senator Murkowski, the chairman of our Energy Committee and a member of this committee, too, an opportunity—do you have a statement, Senator?

STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me commend you for holding this very important hearing.

First, I would like to call your attention to an article that appeared the other day in one of the periodicals relative to the Indian trust issue. It was attributed to Secretary Babbitt, that somehow those who took issue with contracting outside the BIA—I found that very offensive and actually inexcusable—I think it's fair to say that the type of detail associated with maintaining individual accounts under the BIA is something that is specialized in its very nature. That's not to suggest that the BIA cannot do it, but it is reasonable to assume that those who are in the business can do it a lot better, a lot cheaper, and a lot more accurately, because that's their business.

I would encourage you, Mr. Chairman, to reflect on the reality that many American Indians are critical of the procedures used by the BIA in their inability to basically meet the obligations associated with that detail.

So I would hope that we could rectify that situation by providing the actual and accurate detailed accounting that is necessary, and that the Secretary would be a little more moderate in his condemnation of those who are trying to make some positive suggestions to get the job done. This is in your area, and we both feel that some changes have to be made.

Putting that aside, I just want to draw your attention, Mr. Chairman, to some of the problems associated with this discussion today. I know of your concern with inhalant abuse. It is estimated to be the fastest-growing abuse problem among teens. It has increased 111 percent in 5 years, from 1991-96. I am told that 20 percent of all the students in my State of Alaska have had some experience with inhalants, to a large degree gasoline, which is available on your snow machine or what have you. A lot of people don't know that inhalants kill, oftentimes the first time that you experiment with them, and there are possibilities for permanent brain damage, heart damage, liver damage, kidney damage. The Senate had Inhalant Awareness Week March 21 through March 27; we've introduced legislation, and I think it's one of the abuses that is oftentimes overlooked.

I find in my own State a very discomfoting set of circumstances relative to rural village life. We had a policy once a month of communicating directly with very, very small villages in our State and talking to the individual who may be the clerk of the village, or the individual who is always there.

For the record, let me just put in some of the comments. This is at Point Hope: "Student vandalism is at a crucial point. Cocaine and marijuana are the drugs of choice. Three attempted suicides last year." This is a village of a few hundred people.

Ruby, a smaller village: "Running rampant with drugs and alcohol. Liquor appears to be the biggest problem, along with marijuana and cocaine." The liquor store owner is a prominent citizen who happens to be on the city council. They are trying to do something about suicides; they had four suicides last year, and would like the State to authorize some kind of a luggage search for alcohol.

Bethel—a 15-year-old boy amassed bomb-making material, taking it to school the day before graduation. At the same school, in 1997, a 16-year-old went on a shooting rampage, killing the school principal and a student.

So we are not immune to national exposure to these things, relative to life in the village. And a good deal of it, Mr. Chairman, is lack of hope. It is a situation where these young people are in a very, very small village, very isolated. They have the availability of television so they can see what a young person in Malibu is doing; he's taking a surfboard down to the beach, maybe, in March, and they're look at 40 to 50 degrees below zero weather. And a good deal of their culture has been lost. It has been lost as a consequence of food stamps; it has been lost as a consequence of welfare, and the male role in many families is hard to discern because

he used to be the hunter, the provider, and he doesn't have that obligation to his family any more. It's a tragic situation, and the family unit is being held together by the mother.

We can deliberate an awful lot on what to do about it, but clearly we have situations where some villages have voted dry, and their suicide rates have dropped; their problems in the community have dropped dramatically, but that's obviously a choice of the people, as it should be. But it's a very, very difficult situation.

I spend a lot of time attending a lot of meetings; you know, what do you do about it? We're trying to maintain a culture in rural Alaska that we have traditionally had. Can we maintain that successfully if there are no jobs out there? It's a good question. We look at the Depression; what happened? People moved to the areas where there were jobs. They left their homes and established new homes.

I don't know what we're going to do, but I wanted this opportunity to simply share with you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the committee the reality that's out there in rural America, particularly in my State with our indigenous Eskimo, Aleut, and Indian people. In those villages it is tough, because there is no hope.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I might mention a couple of things. That GAO report dealing with the trust money will be due, and we have scheduled a hearing on that after Memorial Day. You might be interested in that.

I am also framing up a letter to the President, because I was also concerned about that statement that I found very troubling, that if anybody complained about things that are going on in the Bureau, somehow you are tainted with prejudice or something, when in fact it is the Indian people themselves that are complaining about some of the problems with the Bureau, and many of them are passed through this committee.

So you might like to look at that letter.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thanks, I will, I'm glad you did mention the terrible problem with drugs. You mentioned cocaine and some sophisticated drugs. I know the places I visited, they have a bigger problem with spray paint, oven cleaner, glue—those kinds of real "burn out the mind" kinds of things that unfortunately youngsters get involved with.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, let's go ahead with Mr. Begay's testimony.

**STATEMENT OF NOTAH BEGAY III, PROFESSIONAL GOLFER,
MEMBER OF PGA, ALBUQUERQUE, NM**

Mr. BEGAY. Mr. Chairman, honorable members of the committee, my name is Notah Begay III. I am a member of the Navajo Nation, and on my grandmother's side of the Salt Clan, and on my mother's side I am one-quarter San Felipe and one-quarter Isleta, and of the Fox Clan on her side.

It is my distinct honor to appear before you today to give my personal testimony as to my experiences on behalf of Native American young people.

I am not sure if any of you are aware, but I am a professional golfer. I am currently the only full-blooded Native American to

have ever played on the PGA Tour. I guess I'm just going to kind of tell you how I got there.

I learned golf at a very early age. I'm 26 years old, and I started playing when I was about 6 years old. I guess the question I get asked most often is what stirred my interest, how did a Native American become interested in a game like golf that requires such a huge financial obligation.

My dad used to play in a "twilight league" every Thursday. He used to work for the BIA, and that was my initial introduction to golf. Since then, I just fell in love with the game. I would save up my money to buy practice balls, but there came a point in time when my urgency to practice exceeded my piggy bank, so one evening I waited in the parking lot at the local public golf course for the head professional to finish closing up his shop, and I went up to him—his name was Don Zamora—and I said, "Mr. Zamora, my name is Notah Begay, and I am interested in working for you." I said, "Wait, you do not have to pay me. I simply want to practice and play for free."

So he ended up hiring me. I would show up every morning at 5:30. I would pull out all the golf carts and make sure they were in proper order, make sure everything was in line, and would play all summer for nothing, basically. I went on to become fairly successful. I won some State junior titles when I was 9 and 10, and at the age of 14 I won the World Junior Championships for 14 and under, and I won that same title for 17 and under when I was 17.

By my senior year in high school, I had won two State golf titles. I played on two State high school basketball championship teams and played on a nationally-ranked soccer team. Going into college, I was recruited by Stanford University. I signed a letter of intent to play there, but after my senior year in high school I was the number one ranked junior golfer in America; notably, the number two player that year was Tiger Woods. I went on to play at Stanford, where I became a three-time All American. I played on the national championship team in 1994 and set the all-time lowest scoring record for 18 holes in NCAA competition at 26, 10 under.

Later that year—we played in 1995, and after that I represented the United States in what is the equivalent of the Olympic team for golf, which is the Walker Cup competition. It is a biennial event that is held every other year; it is held in the United States, and then it is held in Europe. That was a landmark year because it was the first year that there were two minorities on the golf team. Tiger Woods was the first African American ever to represent the United States, and I was the first Native American ever to represent the United States.

After that event I turned pro. I had limited success. I played on the Canadian Tour for 2 years and last year played on the Nike Tour. In that year I set another scoring record—it was a PGA Tour record this time; I shot the third-ever sub-60 round in the history of professional golf. Later that year I acquired my full-time status for this year to play on the PGA Tour, which is why I am now a rookie. I have played just over one-third of the year and have enjoyed some limited success.

I guess what I would like to say is that I have always had good success with what I've done. I have been very blessed to achieve

a great education. I received a degree in economics at Stanford University in 1995, and I think a large part of my success was due to my own participation in youth activities and the fact that I was Native American—not that I overcame being Native American; my parents made it a point to be aware of who I am, where I came from, my traditions, my culture. It was that, as well as the opportunity to participate in youth programs, that promoted positive ideas that initiated problem-solving, that helped me build self-esteem and courage to go on and pursue my dream, which was to play on the PGA Tour. I am there now, and I am just here to put in my two cents as to how I feel I achieved my success.

It is these sorts of programs that provide viable and tangible alternatives to all the problems that we've been discussing here today, and it's these programs that are vital to the success of our youth in 10 or 15 years from now. I think we need to get to the core of the problem.

I realize my time is up, so I thank you for hearing me.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank you for being here. I know that Stanford has changed their name to the Cardinals, but I guess we could say you're a real Stanford Indian. [Laughter.]

Mr. BEGAY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. I did some graduate work there when they were still called the Indians. I was upset, as many people were, with that name.

We will finish with our friend, Dan Lewis.

**STATEMENT OF DANIEL N. LEWIS, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
AND DIRECTOR, NATIVE AMERICAN FINANCIAL SERVICES,
BANK OF AMERICA, PHOENIX, AZ**

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, Senator Murkowski. It is a privilege to be back. I note that this time I am the senior citizen on this particular panel. [Laughter.]

When I left the committee 4½ years ago—shortly before I left the committee—I sat down with Robbie Calloway and Dom Nessi and talked about how we could expand the role of the Boys and Girls Clubs in Indian country. At that time there were only 12 clubs in Indian country, and we have since, with the assistance of numerous club leaders and Indian leaders around the country, increased that to 46, with the overall goal of trying to get to 100 by the end of year 2000.

One of the things that attracted me to the Boys and Girls Club and the effort there was the variety of programs that are offered through club activities, addressing some of the issues we have discussed here this morning, such as substance and alcohol abuse, but also providing athletic, cultural, computer, homework assistance, things that all too often are lacking in Indian country and things that are desperately needed.

It has been my pleasure to work with a number of tribal leaders from around the country in spearheading this particular effort as chair of the Native American Advisory Committee. We have received support from the National Congress of American Indians in that effort.

At the back of my testimony is a map of the current sites of clubs in Indian country, as well as those sites that are in progress. Nota-

bly, for Senator Murkowski's benefit, I would say that we have made a particular effort in Alaska to reach out to many of the small villages that are often overlooked by outreach efforts such as this. We have flown up to places like New Stuyahok and have taken over a building that was not used to turn it into a club site, a building about one-half the size of this committee room, to provide the kids in that particular village with the opportunities that are offered by Boys and Girls Clubs.

But we are not stopping there. One of the things about a Boys and Girls Club is that we are not seeking to impose the Boys and Girls Club programs as they currently are written and applied in an urban setting. What we do is bring a variety of programs to a reservation and allow that tribe to adapt those programs to their own cultural setting. Tulalip, for instance, built a brand-new club and included a drumming room and an area for elders to come and interact with children from their particular nation. That's an exciting project.

In the Dakotas, we have one tribe that has set up their own teen center where they have a cafe to serve elders and other individuals from their communities. So a lot of initiative is taken within their own communities.

A new effort we are taking, as Dom mentioned earlier, is a joint effort with the BIA. One of the big issues that we've come across is that in many places there are simply no buildings in which to house a Boys and Girls Club. So with some discussion with Assistant Secretary Gover and Dom, we have taken a look at utilizing BIA schools in those instances, to use them as after-school clubs; and when the school is finished for the year, rather than allowing that building to sit vacant, to utilize those for a year-round club setting.

There are 185 schools that exist within the BIA system. About 70 of those are BIA-operated schools, and for the pilot project we would like to start 30 sites in the BIA-operated schools, and this year we will be looking to identify those schools.

One of the things that would be most helpful as you consider legislation regarding youth initiatives is to take a look at some seed money to help us get that started. That will be a critical component, I believe. We have identified about \$3 million that it would take us to start these clubs, both to recruit staff for the clubs, to train them, as well as to equip the clubs. Again, these are in sites all across the Nation. But we need some seed money to help us get started. Efforts then by the club and by the private sector itself could come in to round out the cost of operating those clubs in the outyears.

Finally—and I would note that UNITY and other representatives are here—the last thing we want to do is compete with any other existing youth organizations. I don't think that's the purpose at all; it's certainly not our goal. It's a common goal, actually, to serve youth and to help them succeed in the future. Toward that end, it would be my hope that we could collaborate with many of these youth organizations, and perhaps where they don't have a club to utilize, perhaps they could use a Boys and Girls Club, and I think since Boys and Girls Clubs serve youths 5–18, that some of these

other organizations that are more geared toward older youth could also benefit from our effort.

Finally, one of the questions that comes up is, why do I do this? Let me just show you. Personally, it is important to me to see that this is done. I have been blessed with a good career that continues to grow; but it was very early in my life, having gone through six foster homes before I was age 3, that I look back now and see that many of our Indian people who can be leaders of the future simply need someone to reach down and touch them, as my parents did in my life, and to give them the reasons for hope, give them the tools that are necessary to succeed and to make a positive contribution in society. Sometimes they need an extra hand to assist them. I think the Boys and Girls Clubs, along with these other fine organizations, can do that.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, again, we certainly appreciate your help and consideration in terms of looking for a setaside for \$3 million in the Interior appropriations bill. I think that's a critical effort to get this started.

Again, we appreciate your time in looking into this particular issue. Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Lewis appears in appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. We will try to help you with that suggestion. As you know, all of our subcommittees in Appropriations are just right up to the caps, and you know how it works around here. It won't be easy, but we will certainly try to help you.

Let me just bounce around a little bit here. We certainly appreciate all of your being here. Let me ask you a couple of questions, particularly our two young people, Mr. Lasiloo and Mr. Holthusen.

You come from the southwest, Mr. Lasiloo, as Dan does. If I were to ask you if you knew the names of the Anastazi or the Hohokam, would that make any sense to you, those names?

Mr. LASILOO. Yes; I am a descendant of them—as an Indian person, would it make sense?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; do you recognize those names?

Mr. LASILOO. I recognize those names because I am a direct descendant from both of those, the Hohokam and the Anastazi.

The CHAIRMAN. The reason I asked you that is because you mentioned that the sense of identity and belonging are really vital to young people, and sometimes we just call that "roots," and it is. I really think it is. But as I see youngsters as they go about trying to straighten up their lives, or as they get involved in sports like Mr. Holthusen, I often wonder, what is the connection with traditional identity and how that meshes? How has it meshed with you? You obviously recognize those old names, but clans and societies and things that were so important to traditional people in raising youngsters, in some cases, have fallen by the wayside now. Is there a place for that in the young, modern, 20th century American Indian youngster as he tries to become an athlete or businessperson or something else, a politician?

Mr. LASILOO. Yes, Mr. Chairman; in response to that question I guess I would just like to say that no matter what you become in this country, if you become a great business leader, Native American youth in general have to always remember where they came from because it's such a great part of their life and it's always

going to be a part of their life, and at some point in time they're going to have to learn about that because without it, there would be a chunk missing from them, and they won't be whole.

I guess with respect to that sense of belonging or that sense of identity, how it meshes, it meshes together by gathering everybody together within the community to actually become that, to become a community, and actually help one another, because in this country we cannot succeed without helping out one another and becoming an actual community, coming together and helping each other out.

The CHAIRMAN. That's fine. I understand you.

You mentioned the importance of being active in the community in voting, too, in your testimony. Does your tribal council vote at the same time as the general election? One of the problems that many Indian tribes have is that they have a terrific voting turnout for tribal council elections, but they are not the same date, with many tribes, as the general elections, so they don't vote for the county commissioners or the Governor or Congress or so on.

Mr. LASILOO. I know that 2 years ago, when I our Kids Voting Program was first established, the first year it was started, we had our tribal elections and the general elections at the same time, and I know that the kids voted the same as the adults voted, in the same categories, so the turnout was the same. They voted for the same people, elected the same people.

The CHAIRMAN. The first Tuesday of November?

Mr. LASILOO. Yes; 2 years ago, I believe.

The CHAIRMAN. Delwyn, there have been many, many famous Indian athletes. I am sure you have heard of Jim Thorpe and many who have identified as Indians. Billy Mills was a teammate of mine in 1964. There are some that become very famous, but because they are of mixed blood, they don't necessarily—I know Mr. Begay mentioned Tiger Woods. He describes himself as a "Cablanasian" or something—I guess he's a little bit of everything, but he is also part Indian, as you probably know. Florence Joyner, who just passed away, who was a great track and field star, was part Indian, too, you might know that.

But I did want to tell you that there is a group called the American Indian Athletic Association that has been recognized by the United States Olympic Committee and works with the United States Olympic Committee. They meet three or four times a year; in fact, Billy Mills is on their Board, as am I. I was on the Olympic team in 1964 with Billy; you didn't know that, I'm sure. But there are a lot of people who have been actively trying to encourage young Indians to be in sports. If nothing else—they don't have to become professional athletes, like Mr. Begay; they may not make their living at it, but it's a terrific opportunity to do something productive within the framework of some organized behavior, and certainly we have seen a reduction in drug use and violence and a lot of other things where youngsters are involved in sports.

So you might be interested in pursuing that and finding out more about the American Indian Athletic Association.

Let me ask you, what do you think the biggest obstacle is facing youngsters when they do try to do something productive with their lives? Is it peer pressure? Or is it just a lack of money? For in-

stance, Mr. Begay mentioned the cost of some sports; clearly, skiing and some of those are really expensive and difficult for an Indian kid to get involved in because they don't have the resources. But track and field or boxing, things that require less paraphernalia, they've done very well at when they get involved in sports.

What do you think the biggest obstacles are facing kids when they want to get active in sports, or even the community? What is it?

Mr. HOLTHUSEN. The lack of knowing what type of sports. Some communities focus on softball, basketball, and other things, and I see other kids even playing these video games and things; there are other sports they need to be introduced to, other things like lacrosse and other Native American sports. I can see that a lot of them are really good at other sports, like swimming and diving and stuff.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, something helped shape your choices and influenced your life, as it did with Mr. Lasiloo. What was it that influenced the two of you? Was it a person?

Mr. HOLTHUSEN. It was my family, basically my parents, seeing that I was good at sports and telling me to use it to benefit myself and get my education. As I saw that I was getting better at playing basketball, I focused myself at playing that. And on the other side, I used that to get my education, where I wanted to go. And then they told me at a young age that if you are good at something, use it to where it can benefit you, so I did.

The CHAIRMAN. You had the advantage of a family that cared, and that's great. But as I was listening to Dan Lewis testify, I was thinking about when I met a boy when he was about 6 years old named Maynard, on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation where I am enrolled, who was sleeping in a car body, and he was taken in by some people. Maynard is now the head of the Boys and Girls Club on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation—not the head of it, but one of the active leaders of it. If it hadn't been for somebody outside the family, Maynard maybe would still be sleeping in a car body, or might be dead from alcoholism or something.

So I know that that personal touch by somebody is extremely important. But so many Indian families don't have the stable home relationship where the parents can help them.

Mr. HOLTHUSEN. Mr. Chairman, a lot of children just need a little push. A lot of kids look up to me, and I see them falling off the track, and I just take them aside and talk to them. At the beginning of the school year I saw a lot of kids messing around and not going to class, and I told them,

Hey, you have to get to class and get the education so that you can get out and do something and be better; there are other things to do in life than screw off, throw rocks and cars, and other things.

Just that little push—I mean, me being an athlete and them looking up to me—just that little push from me helped them, and I see them going to class every day, and they come up to me and talk to me. They just need a mentor.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I admire you, because sometimes I know that's not easy. Peer pressure tends to pull you back rather than push you forward. You have to be strong enough to go forward and have the leadership to do it, knowing full well that in some cases

you get criticized for breaking out and doing something good with your life. You get criticized. I know how that works.

Ms. Healy, I think AIBL's principle of "learning by doing," as you mentioned, sounds terrific. Can you describe some of the businesses and projects that those students are involved in?

Ms. HEALY. We have an elementary chapter. What they do is, they have their own quilt business. They organized it in the basement of one of the students' parents, and they work together and create their own quilts. They each have a part in their little business. One of them sells the quilts, and they raise money in their community to buy materials.

The CHAIRMAN. I see. That sounds like a terrific program.

Mr. Begay, one of my big disappointments in life is that I went to college with Ken Venturi, and to this day I wish to heck I'd gone into golf instead of judo, because all I have for all the years in judo is a bunch of bruises that hurt now.

Mr. BEGAY. I still ache from them.

The CHAIRMAN. I have met Ken a number of times since then.

Dan, I know your past performance; we will work to try to get you that \$3 million, but I want you to know that this committee is very proud of you and the work you've done with the Bank of America and Indian kids around the country. You have really taken the leadership that is so important.

I was rather surprised to hear that you were in six foster homes by the time you were 3. I thought I had it tough, being in two. You certainly are the shining example of what can be done if you believe in yourself and you work toward it. Thanks for being here.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Inouye, did you have some questions?

Senator INOUE. I have a lot of questions, but I think I will just make a little statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL K. INOUE, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII, VICE CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Senator INOUE. I have heard all the testimony, and I believe I read all of them, also, and I am well aware of the horrendous statistics, the suicide rates, I am aware of the teenage pregnancies, I am aware of drug abuse and alcohol abuse, the high number of dropouts.

I am also sensitive to the testimony provided today on the importance of hope, the importance of self-pride and identity. This committee has tried its best, with limited resources. For example, we hope to have a museum opening up on the Mall which will demonstrate to the world the great cultural legacy of Indians and Native Americans. But we have two obstacles. One, whether we like it or not, this is a materialistic society, and the most powerful instrument of materialism is the television set. And whether you are rich or poor, you have access to television, and you are constantly barraged and reminded that in this society, if you are anything, you have to have the things, good clothes, you have to have a powerful car, you need a nice home, you need dresses and three-piece suits and designer shoes and all of that.

Yet at the same time, in Indian country, when the unemployment rate is 57 percent, and you can't buy good suits and beautiful dresses and fast cars if you have 57 percent unemployment.

Add to that the fact that because of this lack of employment and lack of proper nutrition, Indian country suffers more diseases and health problems than any other area in the United States. It is worse than third world countries.

As much as we want every child to be a Michael Jordan or a tennis player of world renown, unless you are healthy and strong, you are not going to make it. For example, we have had in operation a law that requires this Government to set aside certain portions of the Government's work for Native America, for Indian country, but it has become so burdensome with regulations and pages of paperwork that you have to do, that just a few have benefited. For example, the Spirit Lake Tribe in North Dakota, and the Laguna Pueblo, they have taken advantage of Federal contracting opportunities.

I would hope that through Mr. Nessi's operation, we can somehow assist Indian country in knowing where the possibilities and the potentials are, because most of Indian country is not aware that they can secure procurement contracts from the Department of the Defense in the millions of dollars. For example, in Spirit Lake, they make one product, but it is enough to employ many members of the tribe. They make camouflage netting; the Army is constantly using camouflage netting. Laguna makes trailers that house communications and all these things that the military needs, and they are doing very well. But somehow we have to assist Indian country in doing this.

I would hope that this committee will take the initiative and simplify the system and just make it very clear that we have to affirmatively go out into Indian country and say, "Here are the potentials, here are the job opportunities," and not something—"If you look into that pile of paper, you may find something."

So we have not done our part completely. This has been one of the most frustrating problems that this committee has faced, but I am certain that the Chairman and I will do our best and we will come up with something.

We just want you to know, that you should not up hope yet.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Wellstone, did you have comments or questions?

STATEMENT OF HON. PAUL WELLSTONE, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator WELLSTONE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, Delwyn from Red Lake, thank you for being here, and Chairman White Feather—you are out there somewhere. This is incredibly frustrating to me. I want young people from Indian country to know that I am cochairing a hearing today on mine safety, the problem of black lung disease, which happens to be a very strong interest of mine. Part of my family, on my wife's side, are all coal miners, and I have to go back and forth. I'm sorry to be late and sorry to be here for such a short period of time.

Since I didn't hear the testimony, I am not now going to start talking and talking and talking. I will only say two things.

First, I just would say to each and every one of you here today that this reminds me of the power of your voice, and if it is okay with Senator Inouye—I hope this does not subtract from what he said, but only builds on what he said—I believe that the future for our country and for women and men in Indian country will not belong to those who are cynics and those who stand on the sidelines. I think the future is going to belong to young people and not-so-young people, all of us who have passion and are willing to speak for what they believe in.

I would like to thank you for being here, and I would like to say that I think you will make a huge difference. We are counting on you.

The only other thing I will say, Mr. Chairman—and I don't have an answer to this, because I have not been at this nearly as long as the both of you have; when I first came to the Senate I could not believe the commitment of the Senator from Hawaii, and I still can't believe it, and the Chairman speaks for himself always. But I look at these budgets and I look at where we're heading and I look at what it will take to invest in the health and skills and intellect and character of young people, including in Indian country, to have real opportunities and to have real hope, and I see a huge economic justice agenda that we're not tackling.

I don't know what this means, but I sure wish there was a way that we could do a much better job here. But you will keep the pressure on us with your voice; am I right? Good. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I want to associate myself in closing with Senator Inouye's comments about not giving up hope. I have been around this a long time, as many of us have; Senator Inouye has been not only a professional colleague but a personal friend for a good number of years, and has been a great advocate of helping Indian tribes.

But for you youngsters particularly, if you look at the history of Indians and all the problems that we now face that were mentioned by several of you in your testimony, dealing with gangs and crime and drug abuse and alcoholism and all of those things, including a lot that you didn't mention, Indian people had none of that traditionally. There was no crime. There was no prostitution. There were no drugs. There was no disease. You couldn't even swear; did you know that? In Indian language you couldn't even swear. You had to learn that in a foreign language.

We're in a lifestyle now where you have to be able to make a living, no question about it. And sometimes if you ask young people what they envision as success, if you just picture in your mind what is success, young people—regardless of what they are, I don't care if they're Anglo or Hispanic or Indian or what—sometimes young people will say, "Well, it's power, or it's title, or it's position, or it's money." Or it's a nice car or it's a big home; that's success.

But you ask your elders, "What is success?" You ask the old people, "What is success?" If they picture in their minds what is a successful person, they won't say that. They will say that a person is successful when he has given himself to other people, when he has helped other people, when he has done something. You know, almost all the old social structures of tribes, whether they were the chiefs of the clans or societies or what, the way you worked your

way up in that, or were elevated by other people, was that you did more for somebody else than you did for yourself; you gave of yourself. It's something that this whole country could learn from traditional Indian beliefs.

But that's one of the differences that I see now between young people in the Indian community and the elders. They haven't forgotten their way; they know the things that they had from pre-Columbian times that we still ought to be trying to preserve, and I would hope that you wouldn't forget that as you move forward, whether you become rich and famous or whatever. I think it's important to not ever forget that.

Senator Inouye and I and several others gave talks the other day to some tribal leaders here that came to the Capitol. I mentioned some places—you know, we're going into the year 2000 next year, 2000, and you've probably read in the papers about a lot of the problems that people are worrying about, the Y2K problem as an example, and whether all the computers and all the systems will be ready to go for the new millennium. I was reminded by somebody else who made mention of it the other day that as Indian people we ought not to think just about where we're going in the next 2,000 years, but where we were the last 2,000 years, too, because I can tell you, there was nobody else here except Indians 2,000 years ago. This building sure wasn't here; it wasn't here 300 years ago, let alone 2,000 years ago. And the places in the southwest where Dan comes from, and Mr. Lasiloo comes from, with those old, old cultures, you know, they go back to long before Christ walked the earth. Some of the communities that were here 2,000 years ago were bigger than any communities in Europe at the time; I don't know if you knew that or not. But Mexico City now is built on an old Indian settlement called Tenochtitlan; it was there thousands of years ago. And south of St. Louis there is a place called Kehokia that was there thousands of years ago, too, and when non-Indians found that, there was a mound, a hill in Kehokia; they thought it was a natural hill, it was so big. It wasn't a hill. It was a shrine, built well over 1,000 years ago; in fact, it was built about 1,800 to 2,000 years ago. It was an altar. It was a place where they worshipped. Do you know how big the pyramids are in Egypt? It was bigger than any of those pyramids, bigger than any of them at the base, and perfectly square, too.

So there was a lot of history here before we got involved in trying to make a living, so I would just point that out that as you move forward—I hope you all become rich and famous; that's great, I guess it's the American dream, but don't forget where you came from and don't forget your roots.

With that, this hearing will remain open for 2 weeks for any additional comments. I appreciate your being here.

Thank you, Senator Inouye, for your participation.

The committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11 a.m., the committee was adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DOMINIC NESSI, ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am pleased to be here today to discuss Native American Youth Activities and Initiatives within the office of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Each day we read the many reports that catalog issues facing Indian youth, Indian families and Indian communities. On-reservation poverty and unemployment is the highest in the nation. One in 25 Indians age 18 and older is under the jurisdiction of a criminal justice system. The reported incidence of child maltreatment in Indian communities has risen 18 percent, while the rate fell nationwide. The arrest rate among American Indians for alcohol-related offenses is double that of all races.

Despite the odds, tribal leaders, Indian students, teachers, and community volunteers, are working to change these statistics. The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs is encouraging tribes to duplicate successful tribal initiatives like the Winnebago of Nebraska program that puts troubled youth to work with a bison herd, as well as community-based substance abuse prevention, Gang Resistance Education and Training, mentoring and restitution programs. He is also working with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to launch programs on 30 reservations.

The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans and the Director of Indian Health Services have joined together to sponsor a national Indian youth conference. Entitled "Youth First: The Future of Indian America—Planting the Seeds of Culture & Knowledge" the conference will be held June 2-4, in Denver, Colorado. Not only will the conference provide Indian youth with leadership skills, but it addresses health, wellness, education, and identity issues facing today's Indian youth. The conference also offers adult volunteers an opportunity to learn more about the many national resources available to assist communities in developing initiatives for youth. The goal of the Assistant Secretary is to create a forum in which tribal representatives can build local partnerships with national youth organizations such as UNITY, WINGS of America, Visible Horizons, Indian Youth of America, the Native American Sports Council, and Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

This is a collaborative effort of Federal agencies, tribal leaders, and national Indian organizations with a single vision—to expand the resources available to local communities so that the people who know the needs of their communities have the tools to develop opportunities for their young people. The end result of this conference will be a network for national youth organizations which focuses on the development of community-based capacity and programs. It will identify national youth organizations working in Indian country, the activities and services they bring to communities, and how they compliment one another. Most importantly, it will provide national youth organizations a forum in which to help youth and adult

community leaders develop a national strategy to address Indian youth concerns and issues.

In March, the Assistant Secretary launched the "Youth Alcohol Traffic Safety Plan", a cooperative program between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Navajo Nation. The goal of the program is to eliminate the leading cause of injury and death for the age group of 1-24 in Indian country—alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents—by redirecting unproductive behavior and reducing the incidence of impaired driving.

The plan is an aggressive approach to alcohol, drugs, and impaired driving that includes mandatory school curricula, DWI checkpoints across the Navajo Reservation and billboards with the program's slogan, "To'dithit Dooda," which translates as "Liquor No." Navajo youth are encouraged to share the plan's message "Don't drive impaired" with their peers, families, friends, and members of their communities. This year-long program aims to reduce alcohol-related crashes for the youth of the Navajo Nation, promote alcohol and substance abstinence in their communities to reduce impaired driving, decrease negative behavior of the youth that increase impaired crashes, and improve community cohesiveness and attitudes of safety for their members.

The Bureau is working to establish a multi-disciplinary, governmentwide initiative to address crime, substance abuse, health and education in Indian country. This initiative builds on the community-based planning used by the Office of Law Enforcement Services to design juvenile detention programs. In collaboration with Federal agencies, the community evaluates the problem, develops appropriate resources, and designs programs to effect positive change. Rather than separate, unrelated Federal initiatives, community-based planning encourages tribal-Federal partnerships.

Working with the Bureau and the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services and Education, tribes will begin community-based planning to ensure that juvenile offenders receive rehabilitative services while in detention and following release. This is only a catalyst. Ultimately, only communities can design, implement, and sustain programs to assist youth during and after confinement. This initiative will provide education, mental health, and counseling services that are currently not available at all youth detention facilities, including educational, mental health and medical evaluations and assessments, counseling and education, followed by aftercare and continued counseling after release.

The Office of Indian Education Programs [OIEP] has developed intramural and scholastic sports programs that offer all students an opportunity to participate and develop leadership skills. The FACE Program provides parenting skills to young parents with an emphasis on adult literacy. The Mountain High Program teaches youth self-confidence and reinforces self esteem. It includes a ropes course, outdoor group and classroom training, and individual study.

Each Bureau-funded school, a total of 185, provide alcohol and drug abuse prevention programs as part of their curriculum. These schools also participate in a Youth Risk Behavior survey, sponsored by the Center for Disease Control, that provides a detailed report on their students' involvement with alcohol and drugs. This survey provides critical information that is useful in developing effective prevention programs.

In 1998, the Bureau of Indian Affairs [BIA], Office of Law Enforcement Services [OLES] convened a Native American Law Enforcement Round Table Conference regarding Youth Crime and Gangs in Indian country. Tribal and BIA law enforcement officers shared anecdotal and statistical information regarding youth crime. As a result of this round table discussion, 132 tribes reported the existence of 375 gangs with 4,652 gang members in Indian country. The number of gangs and gang members is increasing at an alarming rate.

To address this concern, the OLES has undertaken a number of measures to include forming a partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to provide Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) certification for BIA and Tribal police officers. Certified G.R.E.A.T. officers enter school classroom settings, target middle school grades, present eight 1-hour classroom sessions, and teach students to act in their own best interest when faced with negative peer pressure. G.R.E.A.T. provides youth the necessary skills and information to say no to gangs.

The dramatic increase in Indian country crime has prompted the BIA OLES to recognize that traditional policing philosophy must change. Contemporary policing or community policing requires police integration into the community, working jointly with the community to solve and prevent crime. BIA OLES will partner with Tribal government, and the communities to combat crime and the fear of crime and affirmatively address quality of life issues.

The Director, OLES has mandated the BIA Chiefs of Police to develop Community Oriented Policing [COP] initiatives with input from Tribal government officials, community leaders, criminal justice workers, social services, health officials, educators, clergy, tribal elders, mental health workers, business owners, and concerned citizens to identify community crime problems. In a recent police managers training session that included all of the newly appointed Chiefs of Police and OLES law enforcement managers, community policing strategies were formulated by the participants. The strategies will be implemented within the next 60 days. Once the community policing programs have been implemented, continual evaluation, including the solicitation of community feed back, will be used to monitor program effectiveness. Each BIA OLES program will participate in the initiative. OLES programs will encourage and emphasize "Neighborhood Watch" programs and, where practical, foot and/or bicycle patrols; Boys and Girls Clubs will be established; and the citizen ride-along and police cadet programs will be established.

Pro-active law enforcement initiatives are being instituted nationwide to combat the importation of illicit narcotics into Indian country and the devastating effects of alcohol related crime. To this end, narcotics investigators have been assigned to each of the five OLES District Offices. The investigators, working with local BIA and Tribal police, have been directed to establish an assessment of the drug problems plaguing Indian country and devise specific pro-active strategies to address them. Further, OLES has established a partnership with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration to implement a nationwide Drunk Driving Prevention Training Program for Tribal and BIA police officers. The primary goal is to provide education regarding the effects of drunk driving, focusing on prevention and intervention. Officers will be specifically trained to recognize violators and to take appropriate law enforcement action. The success of this new initiative to prevent and intervene with drunk driving problems depends, to a large extent, on tribal leadership and community support.

This concludes my prepared statement on Native American Youth Activities and Initiatives within the office of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DELWYN HOLTHUSEN, STUDENT LEADER, RED LAKE BAND
OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS, RED LAKE, MN

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Indian Affairs. Thank you for the honor of being invited to testify here today. My name is Delwyn E. Holthusen, Jr. I am an enrolled member of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa; we reside on our aboriginal homeland in what is now north central Minnesota. I am accompanied here today by my Tribal Chairman, Bobby Whitefeather.

I was told that your interest in having me testify is to hear from an American Indian youth about the issues which confront us. I have spent all my life on the Red Lake Reservation. I went to Elementary School in the village of Ponemah, the most traditional area of the reservation. I will be graduating from Red Lake High School on June 2, 1999, and I will be attending college at Minot State University this fall. My father has been a police officer, a logger and a fisherman. My mother is an organizer, and has worked for our tribal social services and for the Red Lake school district. My parents have supported me throughout my life and they taught me to dream. I have four sisters and one brother.

Toward the end of my elementary school days, I discovered basketball. I was selected to play on the varsity team while still an eighth grader, along with my classmate, Gerald Kingbird. We led our team to the sub-regional championship four times and into the State Tournament three times. When we played Wabasso, MN, in the 1997 semi-finals, our teams broke 11 State records for points scored.

I have been fortunate in having many opportunities to interact with my teammates in a sort of brotherhood which has eliminated any thought of gang-like behavior. As an American Indian, it has been good for me to get to know players of opposing teams and to be able to see them as individuals and not racial stereotypes. For the past two summers I have traveled with the Minnesota Select Team, which is comprised of the best high school basketball players in the State. This has been a real learning experience for me and given me the chance to make many new friends.

I have also been fortunate to be considered a leader by my peers, who have elected me to the Student Council throughout high school. There is a certain pressure in being seen as a role model, but it is something that I try to live up to. Being asked for my autograph by elementary school students makes me conscious that my example means something to them.

Along with this, I serve on the recently formed Youth Advisory Committee to the Red Lake Tribal Council. Consisting of twenty students from grades 5 through 12, the committee has been formed to advise the Tribal Council on matters of particular concern to young people. We are dealing with establishing incentives for various educational achievements now and will be working on a variety of other issues. This is a valuable way for us to learn about our own tribal operations and the government-to-government relationship between the tribes and the Federal Government. Whenever there have been major initiatives in our tribe there has been a deliberate effort to find out where the youth stand on the issues. We appreciate having this input.

I have also had the mentorship of my Tribal Chairman in getting me involved with national Indian politics through the National Congress of American Indians' youth track. I have attended several of these conferences as a youth representative of the Red Lake Band and have worked hard, along with other Native high school and college students from around the country, to organize the commission and represent the views of American Indian youth to the NCAI assembly.

It is encouraging to me that a committee such as yours is interested in the lives of American Indian youth. The world is becoming more and more complicated, as we see all the negative influences which are surrounding us. We need adults who are willing to deal with things as they are, not as they used to be. We need examples of morality and integrity to guide us. We need to know the strength of our culture and the values imparted through it. We need funding for activities and programs, not necessarily only for our recreation, but for positive outlets for our interests and talents. I have experienced the success that goes with athletics, but other talents need to be recognized as well. We need to be taught to give as well as to receive. We need excellence in education to ensure that we can compete in today's world. We need government at all levels whose policies are geared to strengthening families. Our tribes need support in accelerating economic development so that we have the option of staying on our homeland and being able to make a living, if we so choose.

My life has been blessed with all the support I have received from my parents, my family, my community and my tribe. Every person should have the benefit of being believed in and the challenge of having expectations to live up to. I have known for years that people expected me to do my best, and this has spurred my efforts. As an American Indian youth, I am proud of my heritage and will continue to keep the connections to the past as we move into the future. I have been taught to dream, and to do the work necessary to make those dreams come true. Thank you for your attention and for all your good work for American Indian youth.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KAREEM PRODUCTIONS

Gentlemen it is a pleasure to be asked to address this committee. I was surprised to receive such a request but then the attention that my presence on the White Mountain reservation has created has surprised me at every turn. Most often, I have been asked the how and why of my coaching the Alchesay High basketball team. That was fairly simple and is most easily explained as the result of friendships and relationships that developed after I first visited Fort Apache in the spring of 1995. They evolved and crossed paths with my desire to coach and the result was this past season.

You have called me here to ask me what I learned from my experience. I can tell you that I have seen both the negative effects of past policies and the positive potential that is everywhere to be seen. I will enumerate them as follows.

Positively. The potential avenue generating aspects of tribal properties are being explored and developed at an impressive rate.

The use of money from the current businesses that the tribe owns is having a significant impact. Foods, health clinics, electrification, tourist promotions and hunting/fishing are steady successes.

The tribe is starting to see education as an essential tool in getting ahead. This is the most important aspect in my mind for any future progress on the reservation. The history of educating Native Americans is one that we as a nation should not be proud of. For example, the Carlyle Indian school in Penn. was a place where Indian youths were told that they must totally give up their tribal identity to be successful in America. They were made to cut their hair. They were forbidden under pain of physical punishment to speak their native tongue. All the skills they learned—serving, cleaning, carpentry, animal husbandry et cetera were designed to make any entry into mainstream America be done on the lowest of levels. But finally, there was only one school in America. No serious attempt on a national

scale was made to educate Indians after the hostilities of the late 19th Century were over.

The State of Arizona only attempted to educate Apaches since 1964. The Roosevelt School at Fort Apache was run along the same lines as the Carlyle School. Speaking Apache was punished by brown soap in the mouth or having your ankles shackled together. The tide started to turn when Apache language was used at the school. This program which started in 1994 has made it possible for Apache kids to connect learning to their specific culture. This generation of kids is being taught to understand that they can be Apache and educated Americans at the same time. Unfortunately this is a recent concept in America. But it is one of enormous promise for all Americans. Native Americans who can contribute to our national economy also have the means to resist the demons that plague the underclass in America. Knowledge and skills that are earned in the classroom mean that more people will be empowered to live productive, healthy lives. It is my hope that the various agencies continue to promote educational opportunities for Native Americans. It will be money well spent because the resulting loss of dependence on the Federal Government will move Indians toward real participation in American life.

**Testimony of Manne Lasiloo, Co-President National UNITY Council
Before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Hearing on Tribal Youth Initiatives
May 26, 1999**

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee on Indian Affairs. My name is Manne Lasiloo and I currently serve as Co-President of the United National Indian Youth (UNITY) council, based in Oklahoma City, OK. In addition, by way of background I am 19 years old and a student majoring in Political Science at Mesa Community College, AZ. I am an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community of Sacaton, Arizona. My maternal grandfather is the late Coyd H. Thomas of Komatke, AZ, who was a World War II veteran and a Sergeant of the Bushmaster Division. My paternal grandparents are Amacita Lasiloo and the late Marcus Lasiloo (A Korean War Veteran) of the Zuni Pueblo, NM. My mother is Jeri A. Thomas and my father is Greg M. Lasiloo.

I want to thank the Committee for conducting this hearing and I am honored to have the opportunity to represent UNITY and the Akimel O'odham Pee-Posh Youth Council of the Gila River Indian Community. I believe this hearing is very timely because in many ways our young people in this country are in a crisis. For Indian young people, in many instances, the circumstances are much worse and the challenges far greater. Although many of you know the abysmal health and social statistics that exist in many of our communities, this morning I would like to share with you some of the positive things that are happening in our communities.

As the Co-President of the national UNITY council and a past President of the Akimel O'odham Pee-Posh Youth Council I have had the privilege of being a part of great change. Beginning with my involvement in my own community and now at the national level through UNITY there has been significant growth in the number of programs and partnerships that have been built. It is from this perspective that I would like to present my testimony.

Personal History:

As I was preparing my testimony for this hearing, I was thinking about all of the programs that I have been involved with over the past few years, and all

the events and conferences where I have learned many things. However, it struck me that what has been most important is not "What" has been accomplished, but rather "Why" I became involved in my community with my peers and now with UNITY?

When I was younger many of the things I did were not productive. Sports in the lives of youth can only last so long before they need guidance other than sports. I played sports for most of my school years. However, if it were not for the guidance of the Youth Council I would not be before you today. During my early high school years I was doing things such as throwing rocks at semi-trailer trucks, searching for my identity, and wasting my potential. Most of these activities were mischievous, but at that age I knew no better. I didn't care much about what went on in the outside world because the outside world did not include "us" in its plans. Many of the things that were essential to our survival in the "outside world" were not provided. Everywhere I looked in the community any social ill you could imagine were prevalent in our lives. This was due to lack of available enrichment activities. All of the people I hung out with were the people I grew up with. All of us had the potential to be what we wanted, but we needed something more.

As the years past, I grew tired of searching for a sense of belonging or identity. I am sure that many of you, at one point, also searched for a sense of identity and belonging. I believe it is a universal truth that all youth search for. It is a sense of belonging. More importantly, I grew tired of watching my people slowly become victims of circumstance. At 14 I lost a close friend to gang violence. He was beaten to death by a group of local gang members. Mr. Chairman, this is where I came to a crossroads in my life and the point where I got involved with the Youth Council.

Akimel O'odham Pee-Posh Youth Council:

Not only did the youth council provide me with my first job; it also was instrumental in bringing the first Boys and Girls Club to a reservation in Arizona. Ironically, one of the themes of the club was "to provide a sense of belonging." As a result, I embraced this sense of belonging and became an active member. To my amazement, within my first year as a member I was selected as the first "Youth of the Year" of the Gila River Boys and Girls Club.

Since then, I have been privileged to work with people in my community who have shared a common vision of how young people like myself can be involved. As a result, the activities and programs of the Youth Council have become a model for many programs through UNITY.

- In February of 1996, the Youth Council established the Marion B. Miles Youth Scholarship to provide supplemental financial assistance to Gila River youth whose financial capabilities would not allow them to continue their goals. Marion Miles had realized that a major obstacle in achieving progress was a need for financial support to provide youth an opportunity to succeed in education. To continue Marion Mile's dream, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council pledged to honor her by establishing a Youth Scholarship in her name.
- In June 1996, the Youth Council was selected as the site of one of the top minority youth development programs in the nation by the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research in Washington, D.C. The Youth Council agreed to participate in the 1996 research project "Leadership Development Programs for Minority Youth: Understanding What Works." With the support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research provided the Youth Council with a grant.
- In June 1996, the Youth Council, started one of the first Boys and Girls Club in their community. The first club opened on the West Side of our community. The Youth Council was concerned about the future of the very youngest members of our community and, as a result, we applied for a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. For these efforts we were awarded a grant to start a club, which seeks to motivate youth to continue in school and gain a sense of achievement, as well as reduce delinquency in the community.
- In November 1996, the Youth Council coordinated its 2nd Gila River Kids Voting program. This mock voting program allows kids to be involved in the election process from a very early age. For example, Gila River youth cast ballots for the Presidential candidates as well as the Tribal ballot for their Tribal Governor, Lt. Governor, Chief Judge, Associate Judges and 17 propositions on issues they believed to be important to the future of the Gila River Indian Community. Because of this kind of commitment approximately 1000 students across the

community were involved in the 1996 program.

- In July 1997, the Youth Council was instrumental in establishing the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Youth Commission during the 1997 Mid-Year Conference in Juneau, Alaska. The Youth Commission has grown into a major element at the NCAI sessions. It is composed of young Indian people interested in politics, tribal governance, and Native American issues, generally, that impact Indian Youth. The Youth Commission is modeled after NCAI, with committee and sub-committee meetings; resolution writing, lobbying, mentoring programs, and talking circles.
- In November 1997, at the national NCAI meeting in Santa Fe, NM, the Youth Council had the opportunity to share its goals with the national Close-Up Foundation. Recognizing the need to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become involved citizens and leaders, the Youth Council believed a partnership could be created. As a result, in February 1998, the Youth Council was awarded a local program grant for years 1998 and 1999.

With the support of Close-Up the Gila River Indian Community is the second tribal nation to develop a program that seeks to provide Native Americans a better understanding and appreciation of their dual-citizenship, both as citizens of the United States and their Tribal Nation.

- In October 1998, The National Congress of American Indian (NCAI) Youth Commission convened at the NCAI 55th Annual Session in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and had the opportunity to meet with different tribal leaders throughout the convention. Two representatives were chosen to serve on the Youth Commission. Darren Pedro, President of the Youth Council was selected as one of the representatives and Victoria Quintero, Vice President of the Youth Council was selected as an alternate to this Youth Commission.
- In December 1998, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council sponsored the first Gila River Youth Health Forum in conjunction with the Gila River Indian Community Turning Point Partnership. The forum was designed to involve youth in voicing their ideas on what public health should be in their community. As a result, youth were able to

brainstorm with local community partners together to begin to transform and strengthen health care within the community.

- In April 1999, the Youth Council sponsored the first Gila River Indian Community Retreat. The goal was to provide youth with the skills and resources needed to assume leadership roles in their respective communities and among their peers. The retreat consisted of speakers and seminars on key issues facing the youth today. The event focused on four areas: Strategic Planning, Youth Leadership, Wellness and Culture. The retreat was funded by a grant from the Gila River Indian Community Tobacco Tax and Health Care Fund.
- In May 1999, the Youth Council sponsored the 2nd Gila River Close-Up Program. During this intense 3-day program, students learned the political system through a “hands on” approach and were exposed to personal development, self-esteem building and leadership education in a non-classroom environment. This educational experience will empower students to take a more active and assertive role in their community, family, and personal lives.
- Importantly, the Youth Council partners with many organizations and institutions to develop programs to promote education, personal development, citizenship and leadership. Some of these organizations include: National Indian Education Association, National Congress of American Indians Youth Commission, National UNITY Network, National UNITY Council, National Organizations for Youth Safety, National Youth Network, National Crime Prevention Council, Close Up Foundation, Arizona State Juvenile Justice Commission, Kids Voting Arizona, Maricopa County Association of Governments Youth Policy Advisory Committee, Boys and Girls Clubs of the East Valley, Boys and Girls Clubs - Gila River, Gila River Indian Community Gang Task Force, Gila River Indian Community Turning Point Partnership.
- As Indian tribes share a unique relationship with the federal government the Youth Council has also partnered with several federal agencies. These include, but hopefully are not limited to: the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Service.

It is these kinds of opportunities and learning experiences that the Youth Council provides for our young people. As our community grows so will our youth program. For me, I am honored to have been a part of many of these programs and most recently I was humbled to be appointed by Arizona Governor, Jane Hull, to serve on Arizona's Juvenile Justice Commission.

Mr. Chairman, the work of the Youth Council continues to foster community awareness and community involvement while also developing greater partnerships with our neighboring communities, and state and federal agencies. For all the youth that have been involved with the Youth Council, including myself, we have shared in many accomplishments that have brought great personal satisfaction.

UNITY:

As the Co-President of the UNITY council, elected by my peers last July, I would say that many of the programs that I have been involved with in my community could not have been successful without the support and guidance from UNITY. Conversely, UNITY also serves as a national support group for the activities of Indian youth councils across the country. In many cases, UNITY will utilize successful tribal youth programs as models for other communities. It is the purpose of UNITY to serve as a national network to promote personal development, citizenship, and leadership. Not only does UNITY provide guidance and direction for youth programs; it also serves as a catalyst for building partnerships with organizations and governmental agencies to further the goal of Indian youth leadership.

The resources UNITY provides are important, because they have been working with Native American youth for more than two decades. Their expertise in developing programs, networking Indian youth councils and developing partnerships with large national organizations provides a direction that many Indian youth groups need.

For example, the work of UNITY is recognized in the following ways:

- The UNITY network currently consists of over 178 youth councils in 34 states and over 300 individual memberships.
- UNITY sponsors an annual UNITY Conference, one of the largest gatherings of Native American youth in the country.
- UNITY affiliated youth councils are making positive differences in their communities. Programs such as after-school tutoring, cleaning houses of

elders, removing graffiti in their communities, cleaning tribal cemeteries and burial grounds are just a few examples of the positive activities of UNITY.

While there are several initiatives that UNITY is currently developing, I would like to speak about two new programs that I believe have great promise:

- **Tribal Government Initiative - "Engaging Youth in Tribal Government"**: The purpose of this program is to develop a national awareness campaign to reach a broad range of Indian young people through the creation of a youth for tribal government program. It is our goal to establish a minimum of 85 programs in UNITY affiliated youth councils and schools.

To date, we have received funding from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) to coordinate a two-year project which will initially have 5-participating tribes. This sites will be established on the following reservations: Sault St. Marie tribe, the Ho Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, Fort Belknap Indian Community in Montana, Salt River Indian Community and Gila River Indian Community in Arizona.

The project will commence at the upcoming national UNITY conference in Denver, CO on June 25, 1999. At this time I would like to extend and invitation to each Committee member to attend this conference. It is anticipated that the opening session of the conference will be devoted to establishing to goals and objectives of the program. In general, the primary goal is for youth to gain an understanding and appreciation for tribal government and to become informed, contributing members of their respective tribes, villages, and communities.

- **National Fitness Initiative - "Celebrate Fitness"**
UNITY is committed to launching a national fitness campaign for American Indians and Alaska Natives where the youth councils will serve as a catalyst for implementing this program. "Celebrate Fitness" will promote physical activity, sound nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. To date, both the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Education Association have adopted resolutions supporting our initiative. We hope to involve all 178 youth councils in 34 states that are affiliated with UNITY to promote and adopt fitness initiatives.

Importantly many of these vital programs are created and can be sustained only with the help and assistance of other organizations. Much like the work in my community, UNITY has also established partnerships with many organizations and entities.

Some of the notable UNITY partners include:

- The National Indian Education Association
- Volunteer to End Tribal Youth Initiative
- National Organization for Youth Safety, a Partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation
- University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.
- National Crime Prevention Council
- National Mentoring Partnership Program.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I sit before you honored to tell my story of my community and that of UNITY. I sit before you with the hope that my generation and those that follow will have more opportunities to succeed. That is my vision. However, I know that this cannot occur unless we have the support of the leaders of this country.

The quote of President John F. Kennedy comes to mind when he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." To me this means that Indian youth have persevered for the past 22 years through the direction of the UNITY Organization. We have done all we can for our country. We have endured a never ending list of social ills such as; Teenage Pregnancy, Diabetes, Suicide, Gang Violence, Assimilation, and Alcohol and Drug Abuse. We have endured through the blessings of UNITY, our ancestors, and the Great Spirit. Solutions through helpful programs have provided us with the means to do this. We have survived. That is what we have done for our country. Endurance could last forever, but it cannot last without the balance and harmony that is provided by these programs. So it is, that we the Indian youth of America, now ask you the question "what can our country do for us?"

We have earned a fair response to this in honor of generations of hardship. Allow us to pose an answer to the question for you. Our country can join in

on this rebirth and we would like the Committee and the Congress to consider the following recommendations:

- You have the power to appropriate money earmarked for many of these initiatives and we would like your support in ensuring that these programs succeed.
- We would ask your support in providing greater direction to the federal agencies under your jurisdiction to emphasize development of youth related programs. Further, these programs should also be coordinated across the various agencies.
- We would ask for your support and funding for the Indian Youth Initiative being developed through the Indian Health Service (IHS).
- There is a great need for financial support for national non-profit Native American Organizations. While historically, emphasis has been placed on tribal self-determination, so often non-profit organizations are overlooked. We would ask your support for national programs, like UNITY, which serve as a vehicle for the collection of data and information and serve as a "think tank" to develop a national framework to address issues facing Indian youth.
- Importantly, Mr. Chairman, is to recognize Indian youth when considering budget and other policy matters and to support the partnerships that ARE working. Maybe that recognition could come in the form of a Congressional resolution supporting Indian Youth initiatives and providing an emphasis to federal agencies to support youth partnerships.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I would be happy to answer any questions.

APPENDIX

AKIMEL O'ODHAM/PEE-POSH YOUTH COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE:

In 1987, several young people in the Gila River Indian Community organized and formed the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council (Youth Council) out of concern for youth not being viewed as a high priority. The intent was to start a grass roots organization that would re-define youth and adult relationships by increasing the level of respect between the two.

Establishing a voice inside the tribal structure and changing the relationships between the community and young people living in the community were identified as primary goals of the youth council.

The motivation was there. The youth wanted to do something. With clear organizational focus, the **youth council was chartered in 1988 under the laws of the Gila River Indian Community Council**. The youth council developed its own bylaws, adopted a constitution and secured articles of incorporation.

To date, the youth council is responsible for bringing issues to and working with district and tribal leadership. Youth Council members are planning and implementing ways to increase youth involvement in the community. They are also managing community-wide projects like establishing Boys and Girls Clubs, Kids Voting and many more.

GOALS:

- to provide leadership training at the community level;
- to provide an opportunity for the youth to acquire a greater knowledge of and appreciation for the tribal government political system through active participation in that system;
- to educate the youth that they can participate within the current governmental system and make a positive change in their community;
- to help the elected tribal officials solve problems and accomplish the goals of our community by working directly with the members of the youth council;
- to serve the youth of the community by informing the elected tribal officials of the needs and wishes of the youth by planning and implementing social, educational,

cultural, community service and recreational activities for the youth;

- to allow youth council members to work with the elected tribal officials, departments, programs, schools, organizations to provide service and leadership opportunities; and
- to instill a feeling of positive self-worth and esteem, to teach teamwork and respect for the rights and property of others, to promote community pride and to eliminate potential negative influences among our future community leaders.

ORGANIZATIONAL DELIVERY DESCRIPTION:

The Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council is **comprised of two members from each of the seven community districts and six at-large youth representatives**. There are two ways a youth can be a candidate for a position on the youth council. A youth can be nominated by their respective district youth caucus at the tribe's annual youth conference or a youth can declare themselves as a candidate.

Potential youth council candidates must complete a written application stating why they are qualified to participate and fill out either a nominating petition and/or declaration of candidacy form. Present youth council members review the applications, interview candidates and make the final selections to be placed on the official ballot and youth candidates are elected during the tribe's annual youth conference.

ORGANIZATIONAL FACILITATION AND INTERVENTION SKILLS:

Youth Council members are trained in the areas of: public speaking; communication; intra-personal relationships; self-esteem and discipline; effective writing skills; team-building skills; ethical standards; parliamentary procedures; assertiveness skills and conflict resolution skills (peer mediation).

After completing the program's training phase, youth council members are given the responsibility to oversee various community youth projects and attend various local, state and national meetings to network and interact with other tribal leaders and gain exposure to tribal issues.

To this end, youth council members are charged with the task of presenting youth issues to tribal leaders. To accomplish this, youth council members meet and discuss issues among the young people in the community.

PAST INITIATIVES/ACCOMPLISHMENTS (1989 – 1996)

During the past 10 years, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council has been successful in managing and administering programs to achieve the organization's mission and goals. The Youth Council has coordinated 11 community youth leadership development conferences, conducted a series of youth projects and provided a mechanism through which youth have formally voiced their concerns at Gila River Indian Community Council Meetings and numerous other state and national forums. The Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council has amassed the following impressive track record in working with the Gila River Indian Community.

- In 1989, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council participated in project called "Youth Can Make a Difference." This project was an integral part of the American Indian/Alaska Native Youth 2000 campaign focusing on employment and self-sufficiency, improved literacy and education attainment, reduction in the incidence of teenage pregnancy, and lifestyles free from substance abuse. Successful outcomes of **YOUTH 2000** included the following:
 - (1) The National Agenda for American Indian/Alaska Native Youth was developed with input from member youth throughout the country and their supporters. Entitled, "The Healing Generation's . . . Journey to the Year 2000." the National Youth Agenda has 12 goals related to; spirituality, unity, environment, heritage, sovereignty, family, the individual, education, health, economy, sobriety and service. Of significant impact, was the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council's development of local youth strategies that will be used to implement the 12 goal areas of the National Agenda for American Indian/Alaska Native Youth.
 - (2) GRAD Night materials were developed for member youth councils to use in promoting chemical free celebrations during the prom and graduation season. The Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council has coordinated 10 Gila River Grad Night Celebrations honoring eighth graders and high school seniors, GRAD Night is an opportunity for parents, students, schools and the community to work together for a common goal — to celebrate graduation safely.
- In June 1992, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council of Sacaton, Arizona was named the winner of the **first** Outstanding UNITY Youth Council award. The award recognizes one Youth Council which has shown extraordinary accomplishment based on the number and quality of the council's programs as well as how the programs reflect UNITY's goals for American Indian and Alaska Native Youth.
- In 1993, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council was selected to participate in a business development project called Helping Our Own People Succeed (HOOPS). Members of the Cherokee Nation Tribal Youth Council in Tahlequah, OK and the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council learned how to

start, manage and operate a business. The HOOPS project was made possible through a grant from the Administration for Native Americans of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- In 1993, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council succeeded in petitioning the Gila River Indian Community Council to make Kids Voting a part of all future tribal elections. The first Kids Voting local election component was introduced as part of the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Election. Kids Voting curriculum, with the assistance of the Community's teachers and leaders, was adapted to meet the needs of the tribal culture. This was the first voting experience for many adults who accompanied the more than 500 students to the polls on election day. The tribal leaders credited a 7% increase in voter turnout to the Kids Voting program.
- In 1994, in response to the growing need to develop leadership skills within youth, the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council started a mini-grant program. This program was designed to youth in each of the community districts of the Gila River Indian Community to devise youth oriented service projects, and to provide funds to see the project through to completion. The program, called Youth Empowerment for Service or Project (YES), started with the youth council looking for an innovative way to get young people in the community involved in activities. The program encouraged youth to come up with an idea for a project, develop the idea into a workable project, and then take it into the community. The goal of the youth council was to have at least one project completed in each district by the end of the fiscal year.
- In February 1995, Letha Lamb, a founding member of the Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council, testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs during a hearing on "Challenges Confronting American Indian Youth."
- In August of 1995, Youth Council printed its first issue of the *The Desert Wind*, an eight-page paper highlighting activities of the Gila River Indian Community.

Manne Lasiloo
 4832 East Mineral Unit #5
 Phoenix, Arizona 85044
 (602) 785-0669
 E-Mail: Lasiloo@aol.com

Areas of Knowledge:

*Problem solving ability	*Prompt relations	*Networking experience
*Telemarketing experience	*Computer literate	

Work Experience:

Group Leader Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gila River - Komatke Branch	Komatke, Arizona
*supervised and facilitated group discussions	June 1997 - August 1997
*maintained orderly environment	
*led groups in various activities	

Junior Staff Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gila River - Komatke Branch	Komatke, Arizona
*maintained clean working environment	June 1996 - March 1997
*carried out supervision of groups	
*trained Junior Staff	

Education:

High School Diploma	May 1998
Mountain Pointe High School	
Phoenix, Arizona	

Activities and Awards:

*Freshman and Junior Varsity Baseball	1995-96
*Volunteer, Natl Congress of American Indians Convention	1996
*Volunteer, Gila River Kids Voting Polling Site	1996
Volunteer, 1 Gila River Elderly Day Festival	1996
*Youth of the Year, Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gila River	1997
*Volunteer, Gila River Inauguration Ceremony	1997
*Volunteer, 2 nd Gila River Elderly Day Festival	1997
*Volunteer, Gila River Teen Fair	1998
*Volunteer, Gila River Elderly Community Service Projects	1998

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Memberships:

*Treasurer, Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council	1995-96
*President, Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council	1997-Present
*Member-At-Large, National UNITY Council Executive Committee	1997-Present
*Member, National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS)	1997-Present
*Member, Natl Congress of American Indians Youth Commission	1997-Present
*Member, National Youth Network	1997-Present

Conferences and Trainings:

1997-98

*National UNITY Council Mid-Year Meeting - Washington, D.C.	1997
*National UNITY Conference - Phoenix, AZ	1997
*Youth Summit on Leadership - Atlanta, Georgia	1997
*National Congress of American Indians Convention - Santa Fe, NM	1997
*UNITY Communications Seminar I - Scottsdale, AZ	1997
*National Organizations for Youth Safety Meeting - Washington, D.C.	1998
*National UNITY Council Mid-Year Meeting - Washington, D.C.	1998
*Combating Underage Drinking Focus Group Meeting - Washington, D.C.	1998
*UNITY Communications Seminar II - Scottsdale, AZ	1998

Upcoming events:

*National Congress of American Indians Convention - Green Bay, WI	1998
*National Youth Network Conference - St. Louis, MI	1998
*National UNITY Conference - Washington, D.C.	1998



Gila River

INDIAN NEWS

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AUGUST 7, 1998
KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED
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Manne Lasiloo becomes hero at UNITY Youth Conference in D.C.



Manne Lasiloo, President of the Ajmal Q'OdhamPee-Poah Youth Council, District 8 voted as new President for National council.

Section, Ariz.—Manne Lasiloo was astounded when he was selected as president of United National Indian Tribal Youth which represents 16,500 Native American youth. Attending the national youth conference in Washington D.C. which was on youth crime and U.S Attorney General Janet Reno attended. Manne was one of 50 people invited to a U.S. Department of Justice conference on underage drinking.

Serving as the president of the Gila River Youth Council, Manne has encountered many challenges and has learned about Tribal politics, sovereignty and how the youth can be an influence in the future of his community.

The UNITY conference encourages Native youth to learn what issues face their tribal nations and what they as individuals can do to promote progress, advancement and self-determination. Gila River Indian Community congratulates Manne on his outstanding achievements and his new appointment with UNITY.



Youth Commission participants meet with Wilma Mankiller, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.

Youth On Track!

Emerging Youth Leadership Organize to Voice their Concerns

The Youth Commission also convened at the NCAI 55th Annual Session in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and had the opportunity to meet with different tribal leaders throughout the convention. During one of the Youth Commission sessions, young people had an opportunity to have a Q & A session with W Ron Allen, NCAI President, Ernie Stevens Jr., NCAI First Vice President, and JoAnn K. Chase, NCAI Executive Director. In this session, the youth asked questions that dealt with the President's Executive Order, the future of the NCAI Youth Commission and other issues facing Native youth.

Wilma Mankiller also met with the Youth Commission. She stressed the importance of getting an education, learning your tradition, and voicing your concerns. Ms. Mankiller also told the youth not to be afraid of change and to view it as a good thing, though most people look at change as a bad thing.

At the youth luncheon, Mr. Mykelti Williamson gave an outstanding keynote address to all that attended. It was at

this youth luncheon that awards were given to Outstanding Male and Female Elders, Mentors, and Youth. The award for Outstanding Female Elder went to Leona Thomas, Gila River Indian Community, and the Outstanding Male Elder went to Chief Walulaum, Warm Springs Tribe. Female Mentor went to Jeri Brunoc-Samson, Warm Springs Tribe, and the Male Mentor went to Ivan Makil, President of the Salt River Pima-Marcopa Indian Community. Female Youth of the Year went to Amy Reed, Gila River Indian Community, and the Male Youth of the Year went to Frank Seludo from Alaska.

Two representatives were chosen to serve on the Youth Commission. Interested candidates had to go before an interview panel and were asked four questions dealing with issues facing Native

Youth and their knowledge of NCAI. The duties for the two representatives are to ensure the youth's voice within NCAI, to voice the concerns of Native youth throughout Native America, to promote the NCAI Youth Commission and NCAI, attend all meetings set forth by NCAI, and to work closely with their respective tribal leaders to help them better understand tribal and national politics.

The two representatives selected were Helena Andrews from the Salt River Pima-Marcopa Indian Community and Darren Pedro from the Gila River Indian Community.

Two alternates were selected: Victoria Quintero from the Gila River Indian Community and Raymond Paddock from Alaska. This is the first year that the Youth Commission has had the opportunity to have two representatives on the NCAI Youth Commission. The two representatives are looking forward to a full year ahead of them. They are seeking overall support from their tribal leaders as well as all tribes.

The Youth Commission is looking forward to working with the NCAI Executive Committee, staff, and tribal leaders to ensure that youth continue to have a voice throughout Native America. For more information on the two representatives, please contact the NCAI office.



Wilma Mankiller, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, speaking at the NCAI 55th Annual Session.

TESTIMONY
J. R. Cook
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Hearing on Native American Youth Activities and Initiatives
May 26, 1999

My name is J. R. Cook. I am a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and have served as Executive Director of United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) since its inception in 1976. On behalf of our trustees, staff, and all the youth who have been or who are currently involved with UNITY, I thank the Members of the Committee for scheduling this very important hearing. I would like to take this opportunity to share some information about UNITY and two important initiatives we will soon be launching.

UNITY has grown from a dropout prevention program in western Oklahoma to a national network organization promoting personal development, citizenship, and leadership among Native American youth. UNITY's mission is to foster the spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian and Alaska Native youth and to help build a strong, unified, and self-reliant Native America through greater youth involvement. More than 100,000 youth, advisors, and community members have been involved in UNITY since its founding, and many more have been influenced by its efforts. It is very rewarding to see many individuals who have participated in UNITY now in positions of leadership in the fields of medicine, law, education, and tribal government.

Today, some 178 UNITY youth councils in 34 states are sponsored by tribes, Alaska Native villages, high schools, colleges, and urban organizations and are committed to "making a difference" in their communities. Youth council members are actively involved in cultural preservation, environmental awareness, and community service projects as well as promoting healthy lifestyles. Youth council representatives work together through the National UNITY Council to share common concerns and address youth issues.

UNITY has successfully launched a number of special initiatives and activities. The American Indian/Alaska Native Youth 2000 campaign, coordinated by UNITY and funded by the Administration for Native Americans, resulted in the development of a National Agenda for American Indian and Alaska Native Youth called "The Healing Generation's Journey to the Year 2000." The Earth Ambassador program prepared Native American youth to become spokespersons on behalf of Mother Earth. Successful national public awareness campaigns utilizing posters and public service announcements included "Healthy Lifestyles," "War Against Alcohol Abuse," and "Choose Tradition, Not Addiction."

The negative socioeconomic statistics plaguing Native communities are well known. Native American youth understand them in a very personal way – they live them. Youth participating in UNITY are ready to stop talking about the problems. They are eager to combine their energies and talents to "make a positive and lasting difference" in their communities.

UNITY recognizes that youth represent the futures of Indian nations, Alaska Native villages, and tribal governments. And yet, many youth are disillusioned with government or do not understand much about it. This is not a problem unique to native America; indeed it is a national trend. However, because of their relatively small population and limited voting power, Native Americans, and particularly tribal communities, stand to lose a great deal more – their culture, land base, economies, and ability to govern themselves as sovereign nations.

UNITY Prepares to Launch Two National Native Youth Initiatives

UNITY is pleased to announce two new initiatives designed to strengthen and develop Native communities in the new millennium. They will be launched during the 1999 National UNITY Conference which will take place June 25-29 in Denver. *Engaging Youth in Tribal Government*, with primary funding from the Administration for Native Americans, is a two-year tribal governance project. Its goal is to increase the number of American Indian and Alaska Native youth who will be prepared to effectively serve and support their tribal/village governments. For this to be accomplished, they need to understand, appreciate, and become involved with their tribal governments.

The project will consist of two major components: (1) a comprehensive public awareness campaign, and (2) a flexible, non-school educational program to be undertaken by local youth councils which combines knowledge acquisition with direct involvement with tribal governments and communities. Officials of five tribal governments have agreed to participate in the pilot phase of the project: Sault St. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians (Michigan), Ho Chunk Nation (Wisconsin), Fort Belknap Indian Community (Montana), and Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community and Gila River Indian Community (Arizona).

UNITY will also be launching a national fitness initiative for American Indians and Alaska Natives called *Celebrate Fitness!* European diseases, foods, and sociopolitical forces have wreaked havoc on Native Americans over the past century. Diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity are rampant. *Celebrate Fitness!* will promote increased physical activity, sound nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. Following a national awareness campaign will be implementation at the local level. Youth will serve as the catalyst for generating interest, excitement, and participation. In addition, youth will be the conduit for reaching out and involving all age groups in their respective communities. Resolutions supporting the fitness initiative have been approved by the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Education Association. Surgeon General David Satcher has also issued a statement of support. All that is standing in the way of moving forward with this initiative is the lack of financial support.

The Committee's support for these initiatives will be greatly appreciated. Also, I ask the Committee to support the *Initiative for American Indian and Alaska Native Children and Youth* and Executive Order. This would mandate federal agencies to develop programs for our children and youth as well as provide for coordination of efforts.

Partnerships and Funding Critical for Success

These two initiatives are broad-based and will reap long-term results for tribes, villages, and communities. UNITY and the members of its affiliated youth councils can not, however, do it alone. Partnerships and funding are paramount for ongoing success. Over the years, UNITY has worked with a wide variety of organizations. In addition to tribes, Alaska Native villages, high schools, colleges, and urban Indian organizations, our partners include National Indian Education Association, Youth Service America, National Mentoring Partnerships, National Crime Prevention Council, National Organizations on Youth Safety, MADD, Recovery Network, Prevention Through Service Alliance, Close Up, "Volunteer to End Tribal Youth Violence Initiative" National Partners, and National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Funding is critical. While we work with and encourage tribes and local organizations to invest financially in their youth, not all do... and not all can. Monies are needed for UNITY's coordinating efforts to ensure that the network of youth councils engages youth in relevant and positive activities, provides training for advisors and timely materials, and maintains a national voice on issues deemed of highest importance to Native youth. Funds are especially needed for staffing, technology, materials, and travel to local communities.

Mr. Chairman, I want you and the Committee to know about the upcoming National UNITY Conference at the Hyatt Regency Tech Center in Denver. From all indications, the attendance will exceed 1,200 youth (ages 15-24) and their advisors. On Monday, June 28, there will be twelve forums. Youth will be making recommendations to address key issues they identified at their mid-year meeting: alcohol and substance abuse, teen gangs and violence, teen pregnancy, heritage and culture, environment, sovereignty, racial issues, education, HIV/STDs, fitness and nutrition, and community service. The forums would afford an excellent opportunity for the Committee to receive input from a significant cross section of Native American youth. On behalf of the trustees, staff, and members of UNITY youth councils, I am requesting that the Committee designate a representative to attend this particular session of the national conference, offer a message, and invite submission of the recommendations from the forums for inclusion in this hearing's official record.

Thank you for your commitment to Native American youth.



**The National
American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL) Program**

Testimony For

Native American Youth Activities & Initiatives

Good morning Senator Campbell and other distinguished members of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs. It is with great honor and seriousness that I present myself and my testimony to you.

My name is Paula Healy, I am an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, however I live with my husband and family on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Fort Belknap, Montana. I am currently pursuing a Masters In Community and Economic Development from New Hampshire University and serve as the President of the American Indian Business Leaders' National Student Advisory Board. I am here today to visit with you regarding the merits of the American Indian Business Leaders (a.k.a. AIBL) Program.

I believe that to understand the challenges and opportunities facing American Indian youth and their future opportunities, we must also understand the social, economic and educational conditions under which we as American Indian people live. For instance, many of our American Indian college students today are first generation participants in higher education, and those who do attend college are a very small percentage of the overall Indian youth population.

According to the Solidarity Foundation's 1996-97 study of mainly reservation-based college students, explanations offered for a high college drop-out rate include lack of self-esteem, poor quality of secondary schools, a troubled home life, or parents that did not encourage students to excel. Alcoholism was overwhelmingly chosen as the single greatest problem affecting their home communities, followed by drug abuse, and then unemployment.

In essence, I believe that building reservation leadership holds the key to increasing higher education participation so that we may stimulate a tribal community's economic productivity subsequently breaking the pernicious cycle of federal dependency. Leaders must be identified and trained, building upon the Indian principle of learning by doing. The correlation is clear between knowledge, belief, and learning to that of purpose, service, doing, and results. The underlying basis for a successful Indian leader builds from Indian culture, and does not sacrifice Indian identity.

Being a member of AIBL for the past four years, I believe AIBL is the answer to helping our young people face the challenges of tomorrow, it provides us with equitable opportunities for success, and helps us develop the ability to walk and compete within two separate worlds.

AIBL is designed to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit and leadership skills in our American Indian youth to support tribal economic development efforts across the United States. AIBL accomplishes its program objectives through chapter organization and development at the student and professional levels. AIBL Student Chapters are designed to provide peer support, leadership and mentoring opportunities, career guidance, business networking connections, and internship placement opportunities. Student chapters provide an "extended family" support system to help students facilitate the transition of being away from home while attending school.

In only five years, AIBL has organized 34 post-secondary student chapters across the U.S.; sixteen at the tribal college level and the remaining eighteen at the university level; it has also organized seven high school chapters and two elementary student chapters. With an active presence in fifteen states, AIBL's current student membership is four hundred plus.

I believe that AIBL is a strong advocate of leadership development and experiential education, as both rejuvenate ancient and highly successful American Indian educational techniques, breaking down the barriers between formal and informal education. In fact, similar to the U.S. Information Agency's Fulbright Fellowships (which has mentored such notables as Anwar Sadat and Margaret Thatcher), I believe that as a national organization, AIBL has the ability to motivate the best and the brightest.

AIBL provides hope and gives direction to its members for future orientation, showing us as students that we have choices and we have the ability to fulfill our dream(s). It provides us with a means to be successful, increasing our skills through leadership training and culturally appropriate career development activities.

Today, I know that AIBL's main barrier in continuing its efforts is lack of capacity-building resources. AIBL has identified the organizational structure and support materials needed for its program. However, this organization that serves a tremendous economic development gap within Indian Country is in critical need of the financial ability to put its plans into action. AIBL has the vision and the strategy and in addition to placing money in prevention, counseling, or recreation for youth, I think it would be wise to try nurturing or planting the seeds of economic revolution. Given adequate financial support, I would be excited to see what our own youth can do to create businesses and economic solutions that face Indian Country.

I hope this committee will take the initiative to explore this option for our youth. Thank you for your time and I wish you the best in the job that you do for Indian people and America.



The National American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL) Program FACTS....

- Organized at the national level in October 1995; headquartered at its founding institution, in The University of Montana's Gallagher Business Building.
- Governed by an seven member board of directors, a twelve member national advisory board, and is advised by The American Indian Higher Education Consortium; a majority of the board of directors and advisory board members are American Indian tribal leaders; educators; business leaders; and elders;
- Founded on four basic principles; (1) Education; (2) Experience; (3) Leadership; and (4) Culture;
- Has established and organized thirty-four post-secondary student chapters across the United States; sixteen at the tribal college level and the remaining eighteen at the university level; has established seven high school chapters and two elementary student chapters; current student membership is four-hundred plus;
- Is in the process of organizing twenty plus Professional Chapters across the United States;
- Ten of AIBL's student chapters have established a business on their respective campuses through the guidance of AIBL's National Program to gain practical insight into raising capital and running a small business. Six of those businesses are located on an Indian reservation subsequently stimulating the local tribal economies;
- Has designed and developed professional program materials to support its program objectives including; two brochures; an internship handbook for students and employers; a resume guide; tribal business plan guidelines; a small business idea guide; a national scholarship guide; and a student and professional database;
- Through its internship program, AIBL has placed ninety-three percent of its student membership that participated in this program; fifty-nine percent of these students were placed in internships within a tribal community subsequently stimulating local tribal economies;
- Works closely with other National Indian organizations to avoid duplication of services. Some of these organizations include, but are not limited to: The American Indian Higher Education Consortium; The Council of Energy Resource Tribes; The National Indian Education Association; The National Indian Business Association; The National Center For American Indian Enterprise Development; The First Nations Development Institute; the Tribal Business Information Centers; Americans Indians in Science and Engineering Society; Bureau of Indian Affairs' Department of Economic Development and Office of Indian Education; and Affiliated Tribes of The Northwest Indians, to name a few;

Updated May 20,1999

AIBL PROGRAMS ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:

- **AIBL Student Chapters:** AIBL student chapters are designed to provide peer support, leadership/mentoring opportunities, career guidance, business networking connections, and internship placement opportunities. Student chapters provide an "extended family" support system to help students facilitate the transition of being away from home while attending school.
- **AIBL Professional Chapters:** AIBL professional chapters are designed to provide AIBL with a professional resource bureau to assist students with their professional growth and development; serve as role models and mentors; to provide internship and job placement opportunities for students members and to be conference activity speakers.
- **Scholarships:** AIBL's National Program maintains a database and publishes a Scholarship Resource Guide for graduate and undergraduate scholarship resources.
- **Internship/Career Placement Program:** AIBL serves as a national clearinghouse for members seeking summer, cooperative, and career employment. It also serves to provide private/corporate business, Tribal, State, and Federal Government entities with access to talented American Indian employment candidates.
- **Academic Competitions:** AIBL sponsors a National Tribal Business Plan Competition and will implement a National Advertising Competition in 1999 where students compete for scholarship dollars to help offset the cost of their education.
- **National Conference:** This is an annual conference which provides plenary presentations, panel discussions, and workshops that focus on contemporary themes surrounding Indian business and tribal economic development issues. All conference activities include a component that addresses the American Indian cultural value system.
- **National American Indian Career Institute:** This activity is designed to bring Indian students together with prospective employers for job placement opportunities. AIBL also sponsors a Cultural Sensitivity workshop for participating career fair employers to address issues of retention and successful student placement within non-Indian firms.
- **Leadership Academy:** Provides students with leadership training, concentrating on such areas as Learning to Lead; Effective Team Leadership; Teambuilding Techniques; Effective Decision Making; Goal Setting; Conflict Resolution; Managing By American Indian Cultural Values; Building Self-Esteem/Self-Worth; etc.
- **International Program:** Provides students with an opportunity to participate in an all expense paid, six week, international educational and internship experience, as well as the opportunity to market products and services abroad.
- **Chapter Small Business Program:** This program provides AIBL student chapters with business development support and access to a Revolving Loan Fund so that chapters may borrow start-up money to begin chapter run and operated businesses.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS**BY****DANIEL N. LEWIS, CHAIRMAN****NATIVE AMERICAN NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE****BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA****May 26, 1999****Introduction**

Good morning. Thank you for inviting me to testify before you today about juvenile crime in Indian Country and the value of Boys & Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA) in addressing juvenile crime and the developmental needs of Native youth. I speak to you as the Chairman of B&GCA's Native American National Advisory Committee. The purpose of this committee is to provide leadership, insight on Native American values and culture, and guidance as B&GCA expands its services to Clubs serving Indian Country. We want to assure the greatest possible benefit for Native American and Alaska Native youth and their families.

Indian Tribes have displayed incredible resilience whenever their right to self-determination and self-governance is threatened by external actions taken or proposed by federal and state governments or as a result of court decisions. Internal threats to tribal sovereignty, however, are matters not widely discussed or even acknowledged. Left unchecked, these internal threats, such as those posed by juvenile delinquency, can slowly erode a tribe's right of self-determination and self-governance.

The purpose of this testimony is to examine the potential threat that juvenile delinquency has on tribal sovereignty, and to examine how some tribes are acting to address this growing problem in a positive way by starting Boys & Girls Clubs.

Juvenile Delinquency

Last year the United States Senate Committees on Indian Affairs and Judiciary held a joint hearing concerning gang activity within Indian Country. Mr. Kevin V. Di Gregory, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, testified that "...law enforcement reports and anecdotal information do suggest several trends in youth violence and criminal activity in Indian Country:

- 1) juveniles account for an increasing percentage of all serious crimes committed in Indian Country;
- 2) juveniles are offending at younger ages;
- 3) gang members in Indian Country frequently commit violent offenses and engage in crimes for profit;
- 4) gang members will not hesitate to confront and attack law enforcement officers (citation omitted)."¹

Di Gregory went on to state that "A 1994 Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Law Enforcement survey identified more than 181 active gangs on or near Indian Country. A follow-up study in 1997, with 132 participating tribes, estimates 375 gangs with approximately 4,650 gang members on or near Indian Country."²

It was hardly surprising that the Executive Committee for Indian Country Law Enforcement Improvements began its report by stating that, "There is a public safety crisis in Indian Country."³ The report examines the current state of law enforcement in Indian Country and the options for improving public safety and criminal justice in Indian Country. The report recommends that (1) a substantial infusion of resources into Indian Country law enforcement is essential, and (2) the delivery of law enforcement services must be consolidated and improved.⁴ The appendix to the report highlights specific criminal justice problems in Indian Country, such as: juvenile delinquency and gang activity, sexual and physical abuse of children, and substance abuse in Indian Country.

While the report brings long overdue attention to the public safety and criminal justice problems in Indian Country, its value is diminished by the fact that no attention was given to the role that positive youth programs can play in preventing high-risk behavior.

More jails, more officers, and more coordination among federal and tribal law enforcement are sorely needed. But focusing solely on how additional resources can be used to "create an effective police presence, to investigate major crimes in Indian Country, and to augment law enforcement management, administration, and oversight functions" is a one-sided approach to the public safety crisis in Indian Country. Rather than spending all of our time and resources getting prepared for what we expect to be the next crop of troubled youth, our generation should also be investigating ways in which we can build strong, sustainable, and vigorous programs that will improve their lives.

Boys & Girls Clubs in Indian Country

Thousands of young people in Indian Country now have a positive, healthy place to go for recreation, thanks to perseverance and dedication of parents, tribal governments, and other concerned adults to start Boys & Girls Clubs on or near Indian lands. The youth being served by these Clubs are growing in personal skills and leadership, and are increasing in knowledge and pride about their cultural heritage and traditions. On one reservation, local law enforcement, accustomed to arresting a new crop of 12-year-olds for alcohol use on a regular basis, reports that arrests have declined considerably since the Boys & Girls Club opened.

This exciting new initiative in Indian Country grows out of a 12-year successful team effort by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Boys & Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA). In 1987, HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing launched an initiative with B&GCA to establish Boys & Girls Clubs in public housing communities across the country. It was hoped that these Clubs would benefit youth residing in public housing, who are particularly at risk for alcohol and other drug use, health problems, pregnancy, crime, violence, delinquency, and failure in school. The Clubs did indeed help these disadvantaged young people. A 3-year independent evaluation study by Columbia University confirmed that clubs in public housing significantly reduce juvenile crime and drug activity, while improving the quality of life for children and their families.

Responding to similar problems among Native American youth, HUD's Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) initiated an aggressive plan to help Indian housing authorities and tribes explore the feasibility of starting Boys & Girls Clubs. With support and technical

assistance from ONAP and B&GCA, Native American communities are building youth programs that are improving the lives of their children (See attached map of existing Boys & Girls Clubs in Indian Country).

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is now hoping to start an initiative to support Boys & Girls Clubs in Indian Country. The idea of a partnership between Boys & Girls Clubs of America and BIA came out of discussions between Kevin Gover, Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and B&GCA staff at last year's B&GCA Congressional Breakfast. BIA is proposing, in partnership with B&GCA, a program of training, technical assistance, and direct financial support to start Boys & Girls Clubs onsite at BIA schools. Over a two-year period, BIA is seeking \$3 million to provide such assistance to 10 pilot schools, with the ultimate goal of establishing 30 Clubs. It is my hope that this committee will support BIA's request to serve the next generation of Native youth.

Forging a New Path

Here are the stories of six Indian clubs that have successfully faced the challenge. Working with tribal and private sector partners in their communities, these clubs are the leaders in providing positive alternatives and better futures for Indian and Alaska Native youth.

Tyonek Unit of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anchorage

Tyonek, AK

Tyonek, which means "little chief," is a rural village of 130-150 Athabascan Indians. Village residents call themselves Tebughna, which means "beach people." Tyonek, about 40 miles from Anchorage on the shores of Cook Inlet, is accessible only by airplane and barge.

The Tyonek Boys & Girls Club began in 1993, thanks to the efforts of concerned parents who were looking for a safe, fun place for their children. An initial group of six volunteers really helped make the Club happen. The volunteers worked originally to start the Club under the umbrella of the Kenai Boys & Girls Club. The Club also worked with the Cook Inlet Housing Authority to apply for a HUD Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Grant. The two have developed a positive working relationship, and the housing authority has generously agreed to provide annual financial support for the Club with funds from its NAHASDA block grant.

In 1995, a VISTA volunteer came to Tyonek and helped the fledgling Club establish a more formal relationship with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anchorage, with whom Tyonek is still affiliated. Representatives from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anchorage have made a concerted effort to listen to the Tyonek community and respect their opinions about the services needed. The VISTA volunteer, Lisa Stevenson, eventually became the Club's Branch Manager. As an outsider, she had to gain the trust of community residents. The difference came, she says, as "the tribe saw the change in the kids. Parents say the attitudes of their children are more positive. They see the success and then they are drawn to the program. The Club is geared toward what the community wanted."

The Club has made a difference in the community. According to Emil McCord, the Club's first Unit Director, "There was a feeling of hope when the Club opened. The kids had something that really belonged to them." Club members contribute to the community in many ways. Club members volunteer as reading and math tutors at the school, help run a fundraising carnival for the church, assist elders in the village, and plan and operate the youth subsistence camp when Tyonek is the host. Two teen aides work part-time in the Club teaching arts and crafts, playing with the younger children, and helping clean up. For one of the aides, her work helped her realize how her efforts made her a role model to her younger sister and other young Club members.

In addition to sports and Boys & Girls Clubs of America youth development programs, the Club supports a number of cultural programs, such as Native Youth Olympics training, beading, a talking circle, and a drum group. Club members built their drum themselves from a cottonwood tree, and now perform proudly for Tyonek visitors and in other villages. An annual highlight for Club members is the traditional fishing subsistence camp with other area villages. Youth learn the salmon fishing techniques of their ancestors and dry the fish for distribution to the elders in the camp's host village.

The Club started in a 1,200-square foot building owned by the village. The local school allows the Club to use its gym and outdoor fields. This building has served the Club well to start-up, but is now crowded with donated equipment and its many members. Every youth in the village is a Club member.

To help provide more space, the Tyonek Traditional Council donated a bigger building for the Club a few years ago. While it had no funds budgeted for renovation, the

Club is renovating the building with donations of supplies and labor from village residents. In addition, a group of missionaries from Mississippi has traveled to Tyonek for the past two summers to complete critical tasks such as reinforcing the ceiling and installing new floors. The Club moved into its new home in Spring 1999.

The Tyonek Boys & Girls Club has been so well-received at meeting the unique needs of rural Alaska, that it is now serving as a model for a statewide expansion effort across Alaska. The Club described below is an example of that expansion.

Katmai Unit of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anchorage
Naknek, AK

The doors of the Katmai Boys & Girls Club first opened in April 1998 in the Naknek Civic Center building, which is operated by the Naknek Village Council. The Club, a unit of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anchorage, serves three communities in the area with a combined population of more than 1,000 people. Naknek, the original Club location, is separated from South Naknek by the mile-wide Naknek River, and from King Salmon by 5 miles of road. More than 45,000 visitors pass through King Salmon each year on their way to the Katmai National Monument, for which the Boys & Girls Club is named.

The Club's home is the Naknek Civic Center, a building with 1,100 square feet of space that is shared between the Club, bingo, the tribal health service, and other community functions. The building includes a full-size gym, racquetball court, bowling alley, and snack bar. Among the Club's 180 members, the most successful programs are summer softball, the Ultimate Journey, summer day camp, basketball camp, and swimming. "The kids are having

fun and they're safe", says one teenage Club member from Naknek. "hanging out and playing ball is more fun than getting in trouble."

Many organizations in the community provide valuable support to the Boys & Club. The Sockeye Swim League developed a program to promote recreational swimming, water safety, and competitive swimming for Club members. A representative from the Bristol Bay Borough Police teaches a popular crafts class once week. The Alaska Department of Social Services provides anti-drug and alcohol programs. Other supporters include the Bristol Bay Borough School District, Camai Health Clinic, the local Suicide Prevention Program, the Bristol Bay Borough government, and local churches.

As the Club has emerged, donations from local airlines have been very helpful in transporting youth between the communities. However, transportation of South Naknek youth across the river to the Club in Naknek remains a challenge. Other challenges include filling vacant jobs at the Club, publicizing Club events (the three communities lack a local newspaper), and sharing space at the Civic Center. The Club's biggest strength is parent support and volunteer participation. "Your Club will be successful if you have adults there that care, even if you don't have a great deal of money," says April Pruitt, Unit Director.

The Katmai Boys & Girls Club is just the beginning of a strategy to serve the youth of Naknek, South Naknek, and King Salmon. Katmai plans to open a sub-unit in King Salmon in Spring 1999 at the World War II-era King Salmon Air Force Base, which was closed in 1993. In South Naknek, an old elementary school is being remodeled so that Club extension services can be provided there.

Boys & Girls Club of Chelsea**Chelsea, OK**

Like many small rural towns, Chelsea, Oklahoma has not historically had much to offer its energetic youth outside of school. A 1993 survey found that community youth had few structured or recreational activities, the lack of which had contributed to a rise in substance abuse and delinquent behavior.

With help from the Housing Authority of the Delaware Tribe of Indians, housing residents, B&GCA field staff, and concerned Chelsea citizens, and aided by a HUD Youth Sports Program grant, the Club received its official charter in July 1994.

The Club has since become a welcome haven for local youth, serving more than 400 members. Approximately 85 percent of Club members are Native American. Because the Club is not located on a reservation, the Chelsea Boys & Girls Club is unusually diverse. Members come from a variety of family backgrounds, including single parent, stepparent, foster parent, and two-parent homes. Community members believe that the Club's encouragement of diversity is a very welcome quality. At the Club, "Kids are developing a new attitude," says Randy Keller, executive director.

The people of Chelsea and the housing authority have consistently demonstrated their commitment and support for the Club. This cooperative spirit helped make possible the grand opening of the Club's new 10,000-square-foot facility in November 1996. The facility is named in honor of the former Chief of the Delaware Tribe, the late Lewis B. Ketcham.

The Club weaves ceremonial activities and traditional cultural enrichment into its programming, which features a variety of athletic and social programs, including:

- **P.L.A.Y. Daily Challenges.** A Club member won a trip to the Olympic Summer Games in Atlanta through the Jackie Joyner-Kersey World Class Challenge.
- **The Ultimate Journey,** an environmental education program.
- **SMART Moves,** a substance abuse prevention program.
- **Youth of the Year.** Chelsea was chosen to host the 1996 State competition for the Oklahoma Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs.
- **Coffee Talk,** a weekly roundtable for female youth
- **Boys to Men,** a parallel discussion group for male youth, and
- **A Whole New World,** a program for teenage girls, recently won a national Honor Award for Program Excellence in the Southwest Region.

The Club also has gained recognition from B&GCA as an Outreach Partner by increasing its membership by more than 10 percent each year.

The Chelsea Club thrives on its innovation and energy. "Its success is due to our extensive community involvement," says Keller. The Club has formed strong working partnerships with the Delaware Housing Authority, the Northeast Oklahoma Rural Electric Cooperative, and the Chelsea Volunteer Fire Fighters, among others. "Build it and they will come," has become the rallying cry for Club supporters.

Gila River and Sacaton Branches of the Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley Komatke and Sacaton, AZ

The Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley, Gila River Branch, is located in the Gila River Indian Community 30 miles southwest of Phoenix. The Gila River Indian Community,

population 9,500, is home to the Pima (Akimel O'odam) and Maricopa (Pee Posh) Tribes. The Pima Maricopa is the third largest tribe in Arizona.

The Gila River Branch in Komatke are under the umbrella of the Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley. The first Gila River Branch Club is housed in a previously vacant building that was part of a former Catholic missionary school built in 1899. The building is leased to the tribe by the local Catholic diocese. In January 1996, Intel Corporation sent work crews of volunteers to assist with building renovations.

The Club opened in July 1996 and serves more than 360 members. The revitalization of the school as a Club facility has "breathed life back into the Gila River community," according to the Gila River Indian Community Governor, Mary V. Thomas. The Club is viewed by the community as a stepping stone toward improving the lives of its young people.

The Club is proud of its game room, a food service area that can also be used as a concession stand during sporting events, a gym, meeting rooms, and a computer and educational center. The Club recently opened a teen center that provides youth ages 13 and up with their own room for activities.

"The youth are what make the Club special. The youth are the future leaders for Gila River," says Chilo Figueroa, Gila River branch chief.

The youth of the Gila River Indian Community got their second Boys & Girls Club on September 15, 1997. The new Sacaton Branch of the Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley had a fantastic first year with over 400 members. The Sacaton Branch serves youth

on the east side of the reservation, while the original branch in Komatke serves youth on the west side.

Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe

Fort Washakie, Wyoming

The Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, located in the town of Fort Washakie. The Club opened its doors in May 1997 to fill a void in positive activities for community youth. The Club currently serves 280 youth, most of whom are Native Americans. The Wind River Reservation, home to the Eastern Shoshone and also the Northern Arapaho Tribe, is a place of diverse geography. In the east there are high sage prairies and near-desert conditions. In the west are the Rocky Mountains.

Sports are very popular at the Club. The Club sponsors several sports teams, such as basketball, softball, and soccer. The NIKE Leadership and Swoosh Clubs are very popular. In 1997, the Club received a B&GCA Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) grant to purchase equipment and uniforms for a baseball program. For over 20 years, there had been no baseball program on the reservation. For many kids, this was their first opportunity to learn the game. "A lot of the kids are surprised at what they've accomplished through the program," says Executive Director Ted Thayer. Seven teams in the area traveled all over Wyoming to compete.

Members also enjoy academic and leadership programs, such as Power Hour!, the Torch Club, and Youth of the Year. For members ages 14 to 17, the Club provides the Job Awareness Program, which helps the youth investigate various career paths. Another Club program is the Mock Trial, where youth visit the tribal courthouse to take part in a

make-believe juvenile crime trial. Court staff volunteer their time to create cases to try in the mock court. They also teach Club kids how to act as judge, jury members, lawyers, and witnesses.

Keeping culture alive is important at the Club. The Club has a strong arts and crafts program, with a focus on pottery making. Several Club youth raised the money in 1997 to build their own drum. For the past two Halloweens, Club teens have hosted a haunted house and Halloween Carnival with community agencies to raise funds. The Club has also held yard sales, car washes, and dinners. The Club now supports a drum group and a dance group with some of the proceeds.

Club members enjoy field trips to a bowling alley and swimming pool off the reservation. "We try to give them exposure to other places, to see the world outside the reservation," says Thayer. To get around, the Club is fortunate to have a 63-passenger bus donated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and a 12-passenger bus given by the tribal council.

Club members and staff are excited about their first 2 years, and are looking forward to the many possibilities ahead for fun, friendship, and growth.

Lapwai Unit of the Valley Boys & Girls Club, Inc.

Lapwai, Idaho

The first Boys & Girls Club in Idaho's Indian Country opened its doors on June 22, 1998 with great success! Forty youth showed up that first morning at the Lapwai Unit of the Valley Boys and Girls Club on the Nez Perce Reservation. By afternoon, there were 80 kids; 2 days later, 170. The Club now has a membership of 224.

The Nez Perce Reservation in north central Idaho is home to 1,800 enrolled tribal members and 17,867 non-members. Steep-sided canyons, mountains, and prairie lands on top of plateaus make up the landscape. Before the Boys & Girls Club was started, the reservation lacked enough youth activities.

Club members meet in a Church of God building in downtown Lapwai. The Club has an arts and crafts room, gym, computer lab, games area, and office. Kids who used to be bored living in a small town now have many activities to choose from at the Boys & Girls Club. The Club is starting a Torch Club and Power Hour! time with tutors from Lewis and Clark State College. Other special activities have been trips to go rollerskating, swimming, and to play laser tag.

Summer at this brand new Club was a wet one. Over 200 kids from the Valley Boys & Girls Club swam and splashed at the Wild Waters Park in Couer D'Alene. The Lapwai Unit held an "H2O" day in a local park that included trips down the slip-n-slide, squirt gun fights, and a dunking booth.

Unit Director Josh Eckert is planning a retreat and campouts for this fall. Other plans include Nez Perce language classes, drug/alcohol education activities, sports tournaments, storytelling by tribal elders, and a special Teen Center at the Club.

One of the Club's first fundraisers was the "Run with the Wolves" in August, a 5-k run co-sponsored with the Nez Perce Wolf Education and Research Center. 1962 Olympic gold medalist Billy Mills helped draw a good crowd to the run. The runners were very excited to meet him, and to run through the natural wolf habitat. The Club will try to work with the Center more in the future, which works to keep grey wolves from becoming extinct.

The new Club has received a lot of support from its parent Club in Lewiston, the Nez Perce Tribe, the housing authority, and other local groups. The Valley Boys & Girls Club put a new roof on the Church of God building where the Club meets. The tribe pays for janitorial services at the Club and the lease of a 15-passenger van from a local Ford dealership. The Nez Perce Tribal Housing Authority is supporting the Club with financial help from a HUD grant. With support like that from the community, the Lapwai Unit is off to a strong start.

Future Clubs

Since ONAP forged a partnership with B&GCA approximately 3 years ago, the number of Boys & Girls Clubs in Indian Country has increased from 12 to 46. Another 15 to 20 Native American communities are in the process of starting Clubs in States such as Minnesota, Nebraska, Alaska, Arizona, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. This strong growth was made possible in part by direct funding in grants to B&GCA from the 1999 Bureau of Justice Assistant's Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund. With the support of Congress, the goal is to help start at least 100 Clubs in Indian Country by the year 2000.

To support the establishment of Clubs in Indian Country, ONAP has sponsored five regional implementation training workshops since 1996 for Tribally Designated Housing Entity (formerly Indian Housing Authority) and tribal government staffs. ONAP has also created a variety of products, such as a brochure, poster, video, and a "how to" implementation guide, which addresses important issues in starting and sustaining Boys & Girls Clubs in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

Conclusion

History has shown that short-term funding and verbal commitments for the development of youth programs, however well intentioned, lead to unsustained programs, false hopes and frustrations. In turn, Indian youth are left with no opportunity to express their hopes and dreams and no outlet to share their problems and frustrations. Such a vicious cycle holds potentially negative consequences for the future of tribal governments. Who will be the leaders of the future? Who will defend the right of tribal self-determination and self-governance before the congress, the federal agencies, and the states?

These questions concern the Honorable Ivan Makil, President of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. At the Senate hearing on gang activity, Makil stated that: "Gangs in Indian Country present a very unique and difficult challenge. We have our own culture, customs, and traditions. The gang lifestyle of violence and disrespect for Community is not a true reflection of our People. As we strive towards tribal governmental and individual economic self-sufficiency, we must also prepare ourselves to combat influences that are destructive to the very core of our stability and foundation." (Emphasis supplied.)

The familiar refrain from our leaders is that children are our most precious resource. Are they? Recall that the genesis of the Report of the Executive Committee for Indian Country Law Enforcement Improvements was the 1993 tribal leaders meeting at the White House. Five years have passed. Indian youth who were then eight are now thirteen. Those who were fourteen are now nineteen. What have these young people been doing for the past five years? What positive influences and opportunities have they experienced, or is this simply the new crop of troubled youth?

By the end of 1999, nearly 20 additional Boys & Girls Clubs will have started in Indian Country. These Clubs have found that the Boys & Girls Club's mission, with its emphasis on self-esteem, belonging, and community involvement, fits well with Native American cultural values and contemporary needs.

The choice is simple. It's time to move from rhetoric to action. What will the youth from your tribe be doing in five years?

¹ Di Gregory, Kevin V. Statement before the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate and the Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate, concerning gang activity within Indian Country, September 17, 1997, p.5.

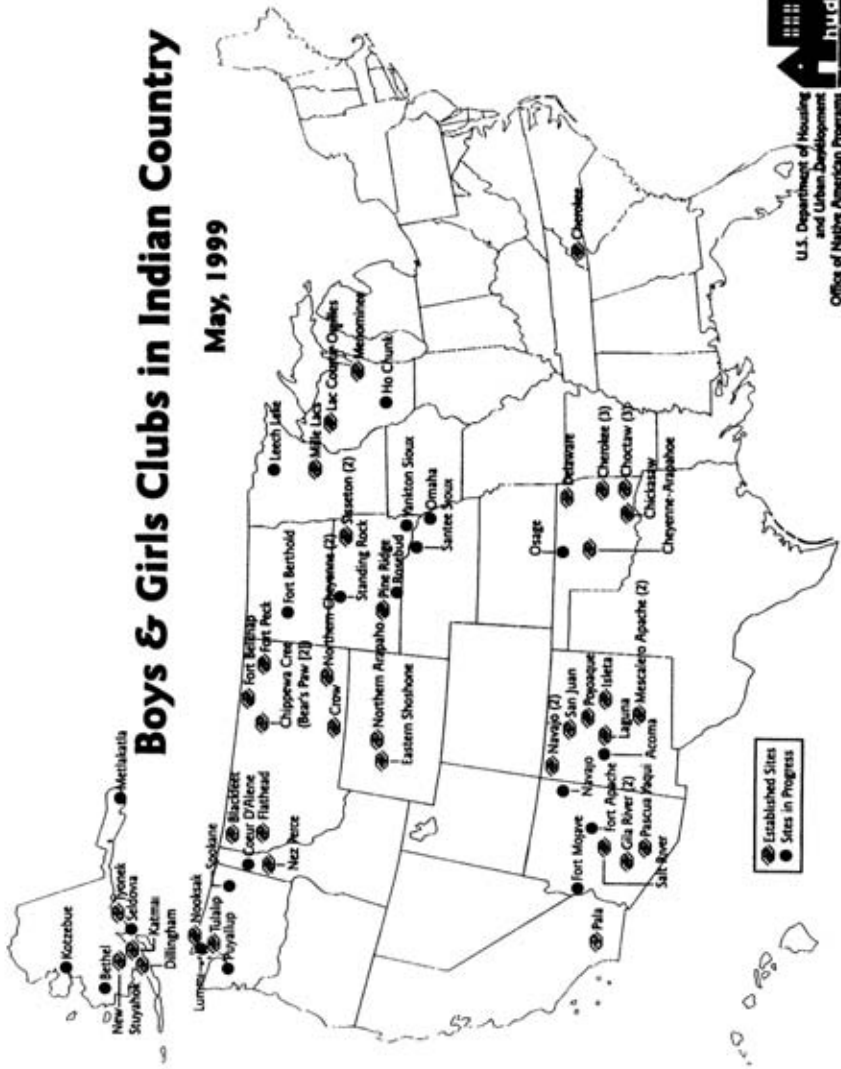
² Id. at 7.

³ Report of the Executive Committee for Indian Country Law Enforcement Improvements. Final Report to the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Interior, October 1997, p.1.

⁴ Executive Summary. Memorandum for: The Attorney General and the Secretary of the Interior, October 31, 1997, p.2.

Boys & Girls Clubs in Indian Country

May, 1999





AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY THE
AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

**SUICIDE: A CRISIS WITHIN THE AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKAN
NATIVE COMMUNITY**

Submitted to

**THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

Hearing on

NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

May 26, 1999

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The American Psychological Association is the largest association of professional psychologists, comprised of 159,000 members and affiliates, who are committed to providing psychological services to American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN).

We want to express our appreciation to Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, for holding this important hearing on Native American Youth Activities and Initiatives. It is our hope that hearings such as this one will address the deplorable conditions that AI/AN youth confront and the resourcefulness they employ in overcoming these conditions.

The physical, environmental, social and psychological conditions that confront the AI/AN youth population are well documented. AI/AN youth face alarming rates of unemployment, alcohol and substance abuse, devastating health conditions such as diabetes, nutritional deficiencies, below standard living conditions, and suicide. These conditions pose significant risks to the health and mental health wellbeing of AI/AN youth and test their resilience. While some may find the resources to cope, many others fail and, unfortunately fall through the cracks.

Although mental health and substance abuse services do exist, they are extraordinarily under-funded. The lack of services coupled with an inadequate number of culturally competent providers, are issues that must be confronted now. As these problems increase, the gap between the prevalence of these disorders and number of providers trained to meet the growing need of mental health services increases significantly. The most promising response to this growing crisis is to implement effective preventive approaches that can deter the establishment of life-long maladaptive behavior patterns that can lead to suicide.

This testimony will provide some recent data on the incidence of suicide in AI/AN communities, identify prevention programs, discuss the effectiveness of these programs and then provide some recommendations and conclusions.

BACKGROUND

For the past 15 years, suicide has been the second leading cause of death for 15 to 24- year- old American Indians and Alaska Natives. The suicide rate for this age group is 31.7 per 100,000, as compared to a rate of 13.0 per 100,000 for persons in this age group for all races in the U.S. population. In addition, completed suicide for AI/AN occurs at a higher rate than in the general population (Middlebrook, LeMaster, Beals, Novins & Manson, 1998). However, suicide rates are not uniform across all AI/AN. Two communities that have experienced a significantly high rate of suicide are the Zuni Pueblo reservation in Arizona and the Standing Rock Indian reservation in the Dakotas.

Suicide is often the result of the failure to treat such problems as depression, alcoholism, and domestic violence, all of which are pervasive in the AI/AN population. A suicide attempt requiring hospitalization commonly costs \$5,000 or more. These costs can escalate to exceed \$100,000 in some AI/AN communities because of geographic isolation and high transportation costs. Such costs could be dramatically reduced with effective prevention programs.

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Suicide prevention programs in AI/AN communities have been organized to reflect the culture of that community and the unique problems they face. The following five suicide prevention programs have been implemented in AI/AN communities: 1) the Zuni Life-Skills Development Curriculum aims at developing community mentors and social

skills for teenagers (LaFromboise, 1995), 2) the Wind River Behavioral Health Program examines the various risk factors such as high unemployment and alcohol and drug abuse and involves community members (Tower, 1989), 3) the Tohono O'odham Psychology Service utilizes a mobile clinic to provide services (Kahn & Delk, 1973), 4) the Western Athabaskan "Natural Helpers" Program is a selected school based program (Serna, May, Sitaker, IHS & CDC, 1998), and 5) the Indian Suicide Prevention Center is aimed at advocating for imprisoned at-risk adolescents (Shore, Bopp, Waller, & Dawes, 1972). A detailed description of these programs can be found in *Suicide prevention in American Indian and Alaska Native communities: A critical review of programs* by Middlebrook, LeMaster, Beals, Novins and Manson (1998), of the Division of American Indian and Alaska Native Programs at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

OUTCOMES

A number of these suicide prevention programs have been implemented and data on their effectiveness are beginning to be disseminated. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concludes that suicidal acts in the Western Athabaskan tribe have been significantly reduced since the implementation of the suicide prevention program in 1990. The suicide rate prior to the implementation of the program was 59.8 per 100,000. After the program was implemented, the rate dropped significantly to 8.9 in 1990-1991, and to 9.2 in 1992-1993, but rose to 17.6 in 1994-1995, and stabilized at 10.9 in 1996-1997.

In a personal communication from Hayes Lewis, former Superintendent of the Zuni Public Schools, he indicates that there have been no suicides in the 15-24 age group since the Zuni Life-Skills Development Program was implemented in 1989. Prior to this time,

the suicide rate averaged two per year for the past 20 years, with over 100 suicide attempts per year.

There is a critical need to assess the effectiveness of these programs so that other communities may replicate the successful programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that suicide prevention programs are beginning to provide **valid and reliable** evidence regarding their effectiveness. Increased funding is required to both replicate these programs and to adapt each program to the needs of each reservation. Without additional funding, suicide programs will not have the resources necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions.

A Suicide Prevention Resource Center, at the Centers for Disease Control, with a \$3 million budget is urgently needed to develop community partnerships, provide grants, support developing knowledge, conduct analysis of state-of-the-art practices, disseminate and transfer information related to preventing suicide, and replicate the results from successful programs.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Reducing suicide in AI/AN country should be of the highest priority in our society. Given the need for and effectiveness of these programs, we must now be resolved to make the financial commitment to make these programs a reality in every AI/AN community.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, the American Psychological Association looks forward to working with you and your efforts to improve the mental health status and reduce the suicide rate of AI/AN youth.

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**TESTIMONY OF STEPHEN A. JANGER
PRESIDENT, CLOSE UP FOUNDATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
MAY 26, 1999**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of this Committee, my name is Stephen A. Janger and I am President of the Close Up Foundation. It is a privilege for me to submit this testimony regarding Close Up's efforts to provide citizenship education opportunities for American Indian youth. In preparing this testimony we contacted some of our American Indian student participants and asked them to also prepare statements about their Close Up experience. I have attached these statements and I hope they will be inserted into the hearing record along with my statement.

As you know, American Indian students hold a unique place in our society as citizens of both the United States and their Indian Nation, yet there are few opportunities in school to examine the implications of this "dual citizenship." Nearly a half million American Indian students are enrolled in both public and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools across the nation. Wherever they are educated, however, Native students are disproportionately affected by poverty and low educational achievement. The federal government should play a role in helping Native students to overcome the obstacles they face and become productive citizens. In addition, it is important that the federal government support efforts to ensure that Native students understand the implication of their dual citizenship so that they students can become actively involved in both tribal governments as well as their responsibilities as American citizens.

But balancing the two worlds and their role in them can be very difficult for young people. Close Up's Washington High School Program for American Indians and Native Alaskans provides students with an opportunity to study what it means to have a foot in two cultures, or "two worlds."

- They learn to respect tribal elders for their roles in the tribal council.
- They realize if they want to protect their sovereign rights as American Indian citizens, they need to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of government at all levels, federal, state, and tribal.
- By sharing their life experiences with students from completely different backgrounds, Native students develop more pride in, and recognize the value of, their own culture.

This increased pride enables students to begin looking at their culture from other perspectives. By visiting their nation's capital, students have the opportunity to see first-hand how vital it is for them to take a role in preserving their sovereign rights. This information is particularly relevant to Native students who may one day use this familiarity with the government as a vehicle to preserving their rights as both American citizens and members of their tribe.

Close Up Foundation
 May 26, 1999
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Close Up's Washington High School Program responds to the need for educational tools for Native students and their teachers. Our programs use a hands-on approach to civic learning that picks up where traditional textbooks leave off. Close Up participants don't just listen to lectures, they take part in debates, role-play activities, simulation exercises, group work, cooperative learning situations, and facilitated discussions. They are challenged to apply what they learn to real world scenarios.

Close Up participants meet with the people who make government work. In seminars, students discuss the process of government with leading decisionmakers, policy experts, diplomats, and journalists. They also have the opportunity to hear their leaders' views first-hand, and share their opinions and concerns directly with their elected officials. These opportunities serve to de-mystify U.S. government and its elected members, making the system of government accessible and engaging to young people. Based on the unique relationship between the federal government and the tribes, it is especially important that Native students understand the process.

Close Up believes that the teacher is an integral link to the next generations of citizens, and teachers are critical to attaining civic education goals. To this end, teachers who accompany their students to Washington participate in a separate program designed to provide educators with new opportunities for academic and professional development, and to encourage a continued interest in citizenship education and the democratic process. The enthusiasm generated by attending the Close Up Washington teacher program multiplies the reach of civic learning many times over. Teachers return home with newfound knowledge, teaching methodologies, and self-esteem, and they are anxious to share all of this with their community. Without federal funding, however, this program and its contribution to Native teachers and their students is available to a small fraction of the population who need it most.

For more than twenty-eight years, the Close Up Foundation has promoted responsible participation in the democratic process through educational programs in government and citizenship. Close Up has developed and tried to sustain an outreach policy based upon the belief that civic education is important to all students regardless of their families' financial status. This outreach policy, supported by fellowships to assist students with financial need, has ensured that a diverse student body is able participate in the Close Up program.

During the last year that Close Up received federal support for work with Native students (1995-96 program year), we had 248 students and teachers from 38 BIA high schools, and 103 Alaska Native students from remote villages, rural settings, and urban areas participate in the Close Up Washington High School Program. The vast majority of these students received fellowship support. Since that time, we have continued to work to encourage funding efforts on the part of schools, teachers, parents and students. With a great deal of effort we have

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been able to maintain the number of students and teachers on our program, but we would be able to make the Close Up experience available to many more needy students if some seed funding were available from the federal government.

In many cases, Close Up brings students and teachers from schools in remote and isolated regions of the country. These schools have few outside educational opportunities, and often have a student population that would receive the greatest benefit from our program. Although many of these Native teachers and students conduct fundraising drives to try to raise at least some of their program support, the stark financial situation surrounding their communities makes it almost impossible for them to raise the necessary funds. These are tribes without any gaming resources, and their lack of a community financial base that can sustain student fundraising efforts makes the need for some seed federal support that much more compelling.

Close Up hopes to again receive federal funding designated for Native students and teachers so that many more will be able to experience government and democracy first hand. Dual citizenship of both the United States and their tribe is a unique attribute of Native students and it is important that these students have positive feelings about their heritage and their role as citizens of the United States and their tribes. Their Close Up participation can be life transforming to these students as they learn that they can make a difference to their tribal governments and in their role as American citizens. The federal government can help make this possible for many more worthy and needy students.

I hope you will review the attached statements to hear how the Close Up program has influenced the lives of the American Indian youth who were able to participate this past year. Their statements are candid and inspirational. Our hope is that many more students will be inspired in similar fashion through their experiences on the Close Up program in the future.

We would be glad to respond to any questions and to provide any additional programmatic or budgetary detail. Thank you very much.

TESTIMONY OF
 GABE BELILLE
 ROSIE MILLER
 RAEANNA SALTZ
 ANNA WINTERS
 NICOLE MILLER
 BEZHIG HUNTER
 ADAM MARTIN
 JOSH STONE
 SARAH MARTIN
 DARREN KAGIGEBI
 HEATHER GOUGE

LAC COURTE OREILLES OJIBWE SCHOOL
 HAYWARD, WISCONSIN
 SUBMITTED TO THE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
 MAY 26, 1999

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, our names are: Gabe Belille, Rosie Miller, Raeanna Saltz, Anna Winters, Nicole Miller, Bezbig Hunter, Adam Martin, Josh Stone, Sarah Martin, Darren Kagigebi, and Heather Gouge. We are students at Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe School. It is our privilege for us to submit this testimony with regard to our Close-Up experience.

We recently spent one week in Washington, D.C. participating with many other students in the Close-Up program. We feel that this experience was extremely beneficial to all of us and hopefully to our community as well. Many of us have taken Government class in High School. Our teacher has told us repeatedly that even though most of us are not yet 18 our voices are still important in local, state, and national government. We all nodded our heads but never really believed her. When we spent our day on Capitol Hill we were able to meet with Senator Feingold's staff and we actually got to speak with Senator Kohl and Representative Obey. We had some very specific concerns especially about our school. Everyone listened to us and discussed our concerns with us. We really felt a sense of importance. We felt we had the power to make a difference not only for ourselves but also for our whole school and community. We thought no one would listen because of our age, but we decided to at least try. The experience was very empowering.

We've spent an entire year in Government class and learned a lot, however, being able to see and experience things first-hand that we've only discussed gave us a better understanding of many of these things. We now have a greater understanding about personal rights and the Constitution. The activities were fun and educational; this made learning seem easier. We had a chance to talk to students from all over the country and compare opinions and views about current events. We learned about tolerance, respecting other people and a diversity of opinions. We also felt more mature and felt a sense of independence. We all agree that we will become

more active in politics. Several of us have turned 18 this year and we registered to vote after we returned.

An additional benefit of our Close-Up experience is that some of us have a clearer idea on what we would like to do for a career after we graduate. One of us wishes to study Treaty Law, another is interested in working in Washington for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Close-Up exposed us to many opportunities and possible careers.

We feel that it is important that you support Close-Up and its work. Other Native American students could benefit from this as much as we did. We got to meet many other Native American students from across the country. We compared what our lives were like and how our communities were the same and different. We discussed problems that we were experiencing and talked about solutions. It was great to be able to talk to someone new who really understood. We think that other Native American students will also feel this sense of power, the feeling that they can make a difference. We also feel that we are beneficial to students from other ethnic backgrounds. Many of the students at Close-Up had never been around Native Americans. We felt that we helped break down some of the stereotypes others had of us. Many people when they talk about Native American issues just repeat what they've heard or read in the newspaper. We felt that we were able to open a few eyes about issues that we face today as Native People. In some ways we helped educate others.

We hope that you will support Native American youth activities and issues. We too are concerned about treaty rights. We followed the recent Supreme Court decision about hunting/fishing rights in Minnesota very closely as its outcome affected our people also. We would like to see more resources dedicated to helping students stay in school and decreasing the drop-out rate among Native American students. We are concerned about the survival of our language and traditional culture. Schools are a great place to see that these things are not lost. We would like to improve sports programs in the smaller schools, provide a greater number of elective classes, career counseling, and Consumer Education classes in schools like ours.

Most of all, we wish you to know that we completely support the appropriation of sufficient funds to repair and/or replace tribal schools that are in poor shape. We have gone to school in buildings where rain leaked through the roof, wind whistled through the walls, the septic system backed up into the classrooms. We've been moved from place to place for the last four years. We held classes in the cafeteria for months on end- the entire High School- or in drafty hallways. Learning in this environment has been challenging and we hope others do not also have to experience this. We will be moving into new facilities next year and hope that all the other Bureau of Indian Affairs schools will have the same opportunity that we have, to learn in a safe and healthy environment. Participating in Close-Up allowed us to voice our concerns and our support on issues that are uniquely Native American. We feel important.

Thank you for your consideration and for allowing us to make our voices heard.

The Students of Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe School

Guanna Saltz *Heather Strug* *Anna Winters* *Beghin Hunter* *Adam Ball*
Nicole Miller *Darren Rappert*
Paula Smith *David Miller* *Sam* *Adam Hunt*

TESTIMONY OF LINDA CLARK, PAT DEFOE, FAWN MCMILLEN,
SIMON NELSON, AND DARA TOPPING, ALL STUDENTS OF:
THE FOND DU LAC OJIBWE SCHOOL
1720 BIGLAKE ROAD
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Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, our names are Linda Clark, Pat DeFoe, Fawn McMillen, Simon Nelson, and Dara Topping. It is our privilege to submit this testimony with regard to our Close Up experience.

We attended Close Up the week of April 25th, 1999. We feel that our Close Up trip taught us more about Washington, D.C. in one week than what our textbooks could teach us in a whole year. For us, since we are Native American students, it is important to us to learn about our federal government, as many decisions affecting our lives are made directly by people in Washington, D.C. We learned from our instructors, our own senses as we experienced D.C.'s history and culture, and from other Close Up kids. Those of us that are underclassmen hope to visit Washington next year to learn more about our government and about the special relationship between the federal government and Indian tribes. Other Native American students could gain a whole new perspective on politics and the United States government in general.

We learned some good news for our school personally. After many years of attending classes in condemned buildings, our school has made its way up the list of schools to be built through the BIA. A couple of us think we might want to go into politics as lobbyists or maybe congressional aides.

We thank you for accepting our testimony.

Sincerely,
Linda Clark
Pat DeFoe
Fawn McMillen
Simon Nelson
Dara Topping.





Chemawa Indian School

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TESTIMONY OF REPRESENTATIVE STUDENTS
CHEMAWA INDIAN SCHOOL
SALEM, OREGON

SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
MAY 26, 1999

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, my name is Maureen Reed as a student and President of our Close-Up Club I am representing forty students from thirty five Native Tribes though the United States. It is our privilege for us to submit this testimony with regard to our Close Up experience.

At a time when our Federal Government seems to be in such turmoil, it becomes even more important for us to understand the problem that are confronted by our representatives. Living as faraway as we do and as isolated as some of us are, it is hard for us to appreciate the complexity of the interaction between various governmental agencies let alone the even more complex problems of international relations.

Close Up provides us and our teachers an organization that can put together a meaningful experience in our Nations Capital. Thanks to Close Up, on our last visitation to D.C. in March our thirty one students had an opportunity to meet and talk with five United State Senators, and six members of the United States House of Representatives. Close Up also arranged a meeting with staff member from the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and a visitation with the Bureau Indian Affairs. Close Up teachers offered insights that even our best and most loved teachers don't have because of their distance and experience. Their staff is great and present a balanced picture of the most difficult governmental problems.

It was nice to find that our representatives had time to talk with us and expressed real concern. We had meaningful discussions about many of our concerns, for example: health care, education, the war and the future of our country. We certainly have a better understanding of the difficulties you face in the governance process.

All of my fellow students now feel that Washington D.C. is not some distant unknown place where decisions are made without concern for the people back home. Thank you and thank Close Up.

Sincerely,

Maureen Reed
Maureen Reed

EXTERNAL EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

ROSEBUD SIOUX

TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT & TRIBAL EDUCATION CODE

Submitted To:

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I. INTRODUCTION

To improve the quality of education and educational opportunities for tribal students, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe (**RST**) established a Tribal Education Department (**TED**) in 1990 and enacted a Tribal Education Code (Code) in 1991. The Native American Rights Fund (**NARF**) assisted the **RST** in these efforts. This evaluation assesses the **TED** and its Code implementation efforts to date. The evaluation is intended to help gauge whether and how the **RST** has improved education for tribal students; what guidance and revisions the **TED** and Code need; and whether **NARF** and the Carnegie Corporation will continue to support future such tribal education reform efforts.

Although tribal assertion of sovereign regulatory authority over education is still in its infancy and no assessment models or standards exist, this evaluation has ascertained the initial progress and problems of the **RST's** precedent-setting attempt. In so doing, this evaluation:

- ♦ describes the history and current picture of education on the **RST's** Reservation (Reservation) and the advent of the **TED** and the Code as the means to improve Reservation education;
- ♦ sets forth findings regarding the **TED** and the Code's impact on Reservation education; and
- ♦ presents recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the **TED** and its Code implementation.

The evaluation was conducted during the summer and fall of 1998 with this Final Report presented to the **RST** and **NARF** in April 1999. This is the first-ever independent and formal assessment of a tribal education department and tribal education code. While there are other tribal education departments, their responsibilities differ markedly from those of the **RST** or their Code implementation is not as far along as that of the **RST**. The **RST's** efforts to impact positively the course of education for tribal students and this evaluation of those efforts thus both mark firsts in this area of tribalizing Indian education.

The problems in Indian education are well-documented. This and the unprecedented nature of the **TED** and Code — tribal government involvement, coordination, and regulation — make this evaluation of great interest and significance to other tribes and non-tribal governments. Throughout the evaluation, "lessons learned" are offered to help tribal and non-tribal governments and other interested parties determine whether tribal education departments and codes are viable means of improving Indian education.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Major Findings

- The **RST** established a **TED** whose operations are funded primarily by tribal revenues and whose leadership efforts are widely recognized by tribal and non-tribal governments, schools, officials, parents, and students
- The **RST** enacted the Code and the **TED** is implementing the Code and other tribal education initiatives on the Reservation primarily through cooperative and collaborative efforts
- Since the **TED** was established and the Code was enacted, the drop-out rates for grades nine through twelve in the tribal and public schools serving tribal students have declined substantially
- Since the **TED** was established and the Code was enacted, the graduation rates for grades nine through twelve in the tribal and public schools serving tribal students have increased substantially
- Since the **TED** was established and the Code was enacted, little progress has been made regarding tribal student academic achievement levels

Major Recommendations

- Funding and staffing for the **TED** should be increased to accelerate Code implementation
- Issues of legal jurisdiction among the tribal, state, and federal governments over Indian education should be clarified to facilitate the **TED's** Code implementation efforts and protect the **RST** in the event that collaboration breaks down
- For direction and accountability, the **TED** should develop and follow a long-range operations plan with goals and performance measures
- The **RST's** efforts in improving educational opportunities for tribal students by reducing their drop-out rates and increasing their attendance and graduation rates should be expanded into areas of student educational attainment and academic achievement levels
- For future external monitoring and assessment, models, standards, and analyses for tribal education departments and codes should be developed, reviewed, and refined

III. EVALUATION PROCEDURES - BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

With funding from the Carnegie Corporation, **NARF** contracted with **RJS & Associates, Inc. (RJS)** for this evaluation. The major questions driving the evaluation were:

- ♦ What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Code itself?
- ♦ How well has the **TED** done at implementing the Code?
- ♦ What impact have the Code, its implementation, and the **TED** had upon the education of tribal students on and near the Reservation?

As noted in the Introduction, this is a "first-of-its-kind" evaluation in an area of great importance to tribes and Indian education. The evaluation techniques are novel as well. In preparing for and effectuating this evaluation, **RJS** has had to rethink many of its traditional evaluation methods and use options that are tailored to the **TED** and the Code.

In reviewing the Code and **TED**, **RJS** encountered a cutting-edge tribal regulatory and operational framework. We are aware that some other tribes have followed the **RST's** lead in developing tribal education codes, but none have done so by the same process as the **RST**, and none are implementing codes as comprehensive as that of the **RST**. Additionally, the **RST's** education improvement efforts often include initiatives and collaboration that are not conducive to documentation.

As such, **RJS** had to plow new ground and design data gathering and analysis procedures that fit this unique legal and educational structure and situation. Since no other tribe has tried a regulatory effort like this, **RJS** considered comparing the **RST's** efforts to those of a state or states. But unlike tribes, the existence of state regulatory authority over education is well-established and accepted. State authority is typically questioned only in instances of specific application (e.g., challenges to a negative state audit or accreditation report). Hence, no positive models were available there, either.

RJS therefore focused its assessment on data and information that was available or could be readily gathered on the Reservation within the time-frame of this evaluation. **RJS** also relied on its extensive experience in Indian education and knowledge of federal Indian policy and tribal governments. The data and information was then compiled and analyzed without the benefit of comparison to existing models, standards, or analyses for a tribal education department or tribal education code.

Ultimately, **RJS** was able to identify and evaluate information provided by schools and other educational institutions that linked the **TED** and Code-related action to measurable impacts on and progress for tribal students. This is shown in the improved student attendance and graduation rates and decreased drop-out rates at the tribal and public schools that worked with the **TED** on Code implementation.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND CODE

A. Geographics and Demographics of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and Reservation

The Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868 between the **RST** and the United States provided for a 3.2 million acre reservation for the **RST**. Acts of Congress in the early 1900s substantially reduced these treaty-reserved land holdings. The Acts also have been held by the United States Supreme Court to have disestablished the original Reservation boundaries. *Rosebud Sioux Tribe v. Kneip*, 430 U.S. 584 (1977).

Today, the Reservation boundaries are contiguous with Todd County, a political entity of the State of South Dakota. The Reservation and / or Todd County encompasses 1,388 square miles or 958,000 acres. About 580,000 acres (60%) is held in trust by the federal government for the **RST** or tribal members. The remaining acreage is held primarily in fee simple by Indians, non-Indians, and the state and federal governments. An additional 500,000 acres of Indian trust land are located outside Todd County but within the original boundaries of the Reservation.

The total population of the **RST** is over 31,000, making it among the largest five tribes in the United States. Over 18,000 tribal members live on the Reservation or on Indian trust lands within the original Reservation boundaries. The total population of Todd County is over 15,000, about eighty percent of whom are Indian.

The checkerboard land holdings and mixed population present situations of concurrent and often overlapping jurisdiction among the tribal, federal, and state governments generally, and especially with respect to education.

B. History of the Governance of Reservation Education

1. Pre-European / American Contact: Traditional Lakota Ways

Historically, the **RST** had total responsibility for educating tribal members and improving their livelihood. Primarily through the extended family system, all children were given daily and continuing instruction in survival skills, living in harmony with other people and nature, spiritual values, and family kinship and tribal relationships. Some children received special healing, spiritual, and leadership training from adults and elders. These education processes and content were effective as evidenced by the **RST's** thriving culture and economy before contact with non-Indians.

2. The Treaty and Allotment Eras: Federal and Religious Schools

By the 1800s, the growing non-Indian population threatened tribal traditions. In treaties with the United States, the **RST** and many other tribes were forced to cede land

to the United States in exchange for, among other things, schools, teachers, and educational materials. Throughout the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, tribal students were required to attend federal boarding schools located on and off the Reservation or parochial schools — Episcopal, Jesuit, and Franciscan— which received federal land grants and funding to locate and operate on the Reservation.

By 1880, the prevailing federal policy was to "civilize" Indians and assimilate them into American society. This was accomplished largely by breaking up tribal reservations into individual Indian landholdings called "allotments." It was also accomplished through education. The boarding schools were operated similarly to United States military academies. The parochial schools were dominated by Euro-Christian religious instruction. Both systems stressed vocational training and Anglo-American values. They actively and harshly sought to eliminate tribal languages, cultures, and spirituality. Historical and contemporary reports and studies widely acknowledge that these education efforts left many Indian students physically and emotionally damaged.

3. The Reorganization and Termination Periods: Public Schools

In the 1920s and 1930s, the federal policies of allotment and assimilation were abandoned. Instead, federal Indian policy generally recognized and encouraged tribal governments and land bases. With respect to Indian education, however, responsibility was largely transferred to the now predominant state public school systems which Indians were required to attend. Only a few federal Indian boarding and day schools remained. Public schools throughout the country contracted for federal funding to educate Indians. Public school curricula were uniformly Anglo-American, regardless of the tribal student population.

In the 1950s, federal Indian policy shifted again, this time to "terminating" the government-to-government relationship between the United States and tribes. Termination was an effort to reduce the federal role in Indian affairs and to acculturate Indians into mainstream American society. Thus, federal Indian education policy continued to emphasize public schools. When the public schools lobbied for increased federal funding, the Impact Aid Laws, Public Laws 81-874 and 81-815, were amended to add Indian lands to the federal lands for which subsidies are provided because they are exempt from state taxation. On the RST's Reservation, the few remaining federal Indian schools were transferred to public school systems that became large recipients of Impact Aid funding. Research and reports, however, were beginning to question the suitability of public school education for tribal Indians.

4. The Self-Determination Years: Indian Education Programs, Contract Schools, and Tribal Colleges

The 1970s brought yet another federal policy — Indian self-determination. A major component of the self-determination policy was educational assistance to and control of education by Indians. Existing federally-funded education programs were expanded to

include tribes as grantees. New federally-funded programs were established, some of which were based on the unique cultural and academic needs of Indians and the unique political status of tribes. Tribes could contract for the funding and operation of schools and education programs formerly administered by the federal government. In 1978, federal law recognized and funded tribal colleges.

The **RST** actively reaped the self-determination education benefits. The **RST** already operated a large Head Start Program. Now, funding for and operation of other programs and schools were sought. The **RST** contracted the St. Francis Indian School as well as the administration of Johnson O'Malley Indian education funding and higher education scholarships. Sinte Gleska University (**SGU**), the **RST's** college, was founded in 1971. In 1980, **SGU** was the first tribal college in the country accredited as a four-year college, and in 1988, it was the first tribal university accredited to award up to masters degrees in education.

5. Tribal Education Law and Policy

In the 1980s, tribes furthered the federal self-determination policy into a growing tribal sovereignty movement. For the **RST**, a critical component of its self-determination and sovereignty was Indian education. In 1980, a Tribal Education Committee (**TEC**) was established by tribal law as a standing committee of the Tribal Council, the legislative branch of the tribal government. The **TEC** was charged with establishing a tribal education department and developing a tribal education code.

The **TEC** examined in-depth the whole picture of Reservation education, from the success of **SGU** to the disappointing drop-out rates and achievement levels in elementary and secondary schools. It was apparent to the **TEC** that Reservation education had become fragmented. Various providers, entities, and programs offered tribal students different education curricula, teaching methodology, and goals. By the late 1980s, the **TEC** had definite ideas about the role that tribal government and sovereign regulation could play in coordinating and improving Reservation education.

C. Background on the Tribal Education Department and the Code

In 1987, the **RST** requested **NARF's** legal assistance in establishing its education department and developing its education code. **NARF** accepted the request and in 1988, provided a legal opinion on the **RST's** authority to regulate all aspects of education within the **RST's** territory. While generally supportive of tribal authority, **NARF** cautioned: 1) about the many legal complexities and uncertainties associated with tribal governmental and territorial jurisdiction in Indian education; 2) that few, if any, models of tribal education departments and codes existed; and 3) that federal resources available to support tribal education departments and codes were scarce.

Research and planning by the **TEC** and **NARF** nevertheless proceeded. They

agreed that the Code could supplement existing federal and state law and policy, particularly in the areas where the **RST** viewed non-tribal law and policy as not meeting the needs of tribal students. By 1989, the **TEC** had approved a draft code for review and comment by tribal and non-tribal schools, other educational institutions, officials, and parents. In 1990, the Tribal Council appropriated \$30,000 to hire a Tribal Education Director. The extensive Code review and revision process was completed, public hearings were held, and the Tribal Education Code was enacted into law in October 1991.

D. Overview of the Tribal Education Department and the Code

1. The Department

The Code establishes the **TED** as an agency of the tribal government. The **TED** is charged generally with administering and enforcing the Code. The **TED** must report regularly to the Tribal Council, which is the governing and policy determining body for the **TED**. **TED** reporting must include an annual State of the Reservation Education Report (**SRE**). The **SRE** must include data on Code compliance by schools and other educational institutions and on student performance and needs. The **TED** also must act as a liaison among tribal government, schools and educational institutions, and parents and students, and must advocate for tribal education with the federal and state governments.

Since it was established, the **TED** has had two staff positions. Originally, there was a Director and a Secretary / Administrative Assistant. Presently, the Secretary / Administrative Assistant position has been replaced by a Lakota Language Specialist. The two positions have always been funded by tribal revenues.

Since established, the **TED** has had the same Director, Sherry Dawn Red Owl. At present, eleven other positions are associated with the **TED** and supervised by the Director. These include Truancy Intervention Officers and Parenting Education Specialists. While not required by the Code, these positions have resulted from the **TED's** establishment and they address specific tribal education needs as well as the overall goals of the Code.

2. The Code

The Code regulates all schools and education programs on the Reservation — tribal, federally-funded, and state. The schools and education programs are expected to comply with the Code and report their compliance to the **TED**. The major substantive areas of Code regulation are curriculum and education standards, parental and community involvement, alcohol and substance abuse education, and staffing and teacher training. The **TED** is to develop or oversee the development of tribal programs in these areas.

The substantive areas are intended to be the primary means by which the **RST** addresses and improves student performance. In short, the Code reflects the view of the

RST that tribal curricula, particularly language and cultural curricula, parental involvement, and Indian teachers will help more students stay in school longer and perform better. The Code also reflects the **RST's** view that the **TED** is in a unique position to coordinate the various Reservation education resources and focus on specific and long-term Reservation education problems and progress.

The Code asserts the **RST's** sovereign authority — as recognized by federal law — over the education of tribal members concurrently with applicable law of the State of South Dakota. The Code provides that compliance by the public schools with substantive tribal regulation such as tribal curricula will be enforced and evaluated jointly by the **TED** and the State. However, to the extent that the Code conflicts with state law, the Code provides that the Code, not state law, shall govern. To date the legal authority and scheme of the Code have not been conclusively resolved or even tested in any judicial forum. Rather, collaborative efforts have been used to accomplish Code implementation.

3. Tribal Education Initiatives

The **TED** has developed or assisted in the development of several initiatives that are driven by specific needs and problems in Reservation education and within the goals of the Code. By the time the Code was enacted, truancy in both public and tribal schools had reached a crisis level. The **RST** had a compulsory school attendance law, but no agency to enforce the law. In FY 1994, the **TED** designed a Truancy Intervention Project (**TIP**) and secured appropriations from the **RST's** federal funds for general tribal government operations to implement the **TIP**.

In another area, the Code requires schools and other educational institutions to provide instruction in Lakota language. Some schools, however, were uncomfortable developing Lakota language courses without significant tribal participation. The **TED** created a Lakota Language Renewal Project (Lakota Wowaglakka Wounspe) within the **TED**. This Project provides technical assistance to schools and other educational institutions in Lakota language instructional content, methodology, and assessment. The Project also conducts Lakota Language Immersion Programs in tribal communities to assist families in restoring the Lakota language to primary usage. The Immersion Programs then provide reinforcement to instruction in schools and other educational institutions.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law 91-230, places shared responsibility for services to infants and toddlers with disabilities on states and tribes. Tribes may identify, diagnose, and provide prevention and early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and direct services to their families. Early identification and intervention services have proved beneficial in transitioning these children into formal education settings. When the Code was enacted, the **RST** had no agency to provide these services. The **TED** designed a Tribal IDEA program which collaborates with non-tribal agencies and schools. The **TED** manages the program,

including a Tribal Parenting Education Program component that focuses on prevention of disabilities and early childhood development training for families.

V. DESCRIPTION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS SERVING TRIBAL STUDENTS

A. Todd County Public School District

The boundaries of the Reservation are contiguous with those of Todd County and the Todd County School District. The District is governed by a five-member school board and consists of eight elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The composition of the elementary schools ranges from 100% Indian to 100% non-Indian.

Todd County is the largest single provider of education on the Reservation. About sixty percent of tribal elementary and secondary age students are enrolled in Todd County. In 1998-1999, the total enrollment in Todd County schools is 2,126. About ninety percent of these students are Indian.

Todd County's total operating budget is about \$12 million. The significant categories of federal funding to Todd County include Impact Aid, Johnson O'Malley, Title I, Title VII, Title IX, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. In 1992, Todd County hired the first Indian Superintendent of any public school district in South Dakota. Dr. Richard Bordeaux still serves as Superintendent and is an enrolled member of the **RST**.

B. St. Francis Indian School

In 1970, the **RST** contracted the operation of this former parochial school, and has maintained it since as a kindergarten through grade twelve tribal school. The **RST** charters the governance of St. Francis to an Indian parent corporation, Sicangu Oyate Ho, Inc., which in turn elects an eight-member school board. In 1998-1999, enrollment at St. Francis is 680 students. About ninety-nine percent of the students are Indian.

St. Francis presently receives about \$4.3 million in annual federal funding. In 1990, St. Francis was elevated under new federal law from the status of contract school to grant school. As a grant school, St. Francis is eligible to receive its federal funding up-front and annually, rather than on a quarterly basis. It is also permitted to invest the funding and receive and use the interest on that investment. The current Chief Executive Officer (and all past CEOs) of St. Francis is an enrolled **RST** member.

C. White River Public School District

White River School District is located in the northwest portion of the territory within the original Reservation boundaries. After Todd County and St. Francis, White River is the

largest provider of elementary and secondary education for tribal students. In 1997-1998, total student enrollment in White River schools was 445. Of these, 336 (75%) were tribal members. At present, the annual operating budget for White River is \$4.1 million. The current Superintendent is an enrolled member of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe.

D. Other Schools

Several other South Dakota public school districts located within or near the original Reservation boundaries serve tribal students. These include Winner, Bonesteel / Fairfax, Gregory, Wood, and Burke. Some tribal students attend public schools in the State of Nebraska, which is adjacent to the southern border of the Reservation. Many tribal students attend public schools in Rapid City, South Dakota. Other elementary or secondary schools located on the Reservation include Rosebud Christian School, White Eagle Academy, and the Grass Mountain Demonstration School. These schools are not included in this evaluation for various reasons, including: the small percentage of tribal students served by the schools, the infancy of the schools, or the minimal resources available to the **TED** to work with the schools.

VI. FINDINGS

A. Tribal Education Department

1. The RST has established and does fund and operate a TED

The **TED** was established in FY 1990. The Tribal Council has appropriated substantial tribal revenues to fund **TED** operations. Appropriations are based largely on the Director's proposed budgets and appropriations requests. In ten years, annual appropriations have ranged from \$30,000 to \$93,000. See Appendix. The average annual appropriation has been \$68,300. This is significant because direct federal funding for tribal education departments is non-existent and **RJS** knows of no other tribe that funds a tribal education department like the **RST's** from tribal revenues. However, the level of tribal funding is insufficient for the **TED** to implement the Code fully.

2. The TED Director understands the Code and directs its implementation

The **TED** was intentionally established before the Code was enacted so that the Director could be involved in reviewing and finalizing the Code. This chronology has proved extremely helpful to the Director's understanding of the Code. Since enactment, the Code has been implemented primarily under the direction of the Director, with minimal policy determination by the Tribal Council. A decade of the same person serving as Director has provided continuity and credibility.

3. The TED has consistently and increasingly obtained funding for tribal education needs and initiatives

In FY 1994, the TED succeeded in obtaining \$33,000 for the TIP from the RST's federal funding for tribal governmental operations. From FY 1994 to FY 1999, this funding continued at an average annual level of about \$83,300. See Appendix. Also in FY 1994, the TED succeeded in obtaining \$7,600 in federal funding under the IDEA for an Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program. This funding has continued annually and increased monumentally to its present level in FY 1999 of \$947,000. *Id*

In FY 1995, the TED succeeded in obtaining \$250,000 from tribal gaming revenues for school clothing and scholarships. This earmarked funding has continued and it is presently also designated for the Lakota Language Renewal Project and the Rosebud Alternative Program (RAP), a grades seven through twelve alternative school operated jointly by the TED, St. Francis Indian School, and the Todd County School District. *Id*.

These initiatives are not directly provided for by the Code. They do address specific tribal education needs. They are consistent with the overall goals of the Code to improve educational opportunities for tribal students and link formal education with families and communities. However, they require a great deal of planning and coordination by the TED. As such, they increase the Director's work load and stretch thin the TED's resources. In some instances, the TED has been able to delegate or transfer oversight or operation of the initiatives after start-up.

4. The TED has implemented the Code reporting provisions with some difficulties

The TED does gather Code compliance information and other education data annually for the SRE Report. The Report, however, has not been regularly published due to lack of funding. This is detrimental because the SRE is the major Code compliance indicator and a guide for tribal education progress and needs. In general, the schools and other educational institutions have complied with the TED's requests for data and information, especially the Todd County School District, St. Francis Indian School, and the White River School District. The TED has recently encountered resistance from at least one public school district and the RST is reviewing this situation. In addition, the TED has struggled with record keeping definitions and procedures which are not standard from school to school and sometimes even within a school. Changing definitions and procedures is difficult. However, the need to obtain data in standard formats for accurate tracking and comparison is great.

The TED has established a computerized data base for a Tribal Student Tracking System. This useful and creative System follows individual tribal students in all schools and other educational institutions. The System provides helpful information for the TED regarding individual students and families, and assists in overall education planning,

coordination, reform, and advocacy. However, there is at present no effective means by which updates on or amendments to data from the schools and other educational institutions are timely and accurately transmitted to the TED.

5. Addressing unforeseen problems and "troubleshooting" take a large amount of TED resources

The TED has addressed several unforeseen problems and has had to "troubleshoot" other situations in Reservation education. These range from overseeing a two-year overhaul of a major program such as Tribal Head Start to resolving specific conflicts between federal agencies and tribal grantees over Indian education funds. This work has been largely successful, thus showing the TED's capabilities. However, the work also has added duties to the TED's small staff and decreased TED attention to Code implementation.

6. The TED has helped schools and other educational institutions to develop their own initiatives

The TED has helped develop and implement several initiatives that are operated by schools and other educational institutions. These include the Grass Mountain Demonstration School, the Freshman Academies, and the RAP. While not directly provided for in the Code, these initiatives relate to overall Code goals. In most instances, they require creative brainstorming and intensive up-front collaboration among the TED, schools, and other educational institutions.

7. The TED has become a recognized leader in Reservation education

Tribal and non-tribal governments, schools, officials, parents, and students accept and acknowledge the TED as a leader in Reservation education. Much of this recognition is due to Code implementation and initiatives which require coordination and collaboration with schools and other educational institutions. Some schools and other educational institutions now regularly include the TED in their planning, processes, and problem-solving. Recognition is also due to the Director's consistent attendance at meetings of schools and other educational institutions. The TED Director also serves on the South Dakota Congressional Youth Awards Council and at present is the Chairperson of the congressionally-mandated National Advisory Council on Indian Education. This broad recognition is critical to successful Code implementation.

8. TED and Code effectiveness are limited by entrenched attitudes and ways

Tribal and non-tribal governments, schools, and other educational institutions rely heavily on their existing staff and long-standing policies and procedures. The Code was

intended primarily to supplement, not replace, existing staff and policies and procedures. While there has been cooperation in Code implementation generally, there are also instances of resistance and adherence to the adage that "change occurs slowly."

9. The TED lacks an overall long-range plan

The TED does not have an overall long-range plan with performance measures. Such a plan would not solve matters such as limited resources, additional duties, and unforeseen problems. It would, however, help the TED implement the Code and prioritize its resources. It would also provide a basis for internal monitoring and accountability and for external evaluation

B. The Tribal Education Code

1. The RST developed, enacted, and is starting to implement the Code

When the Code was being developed, there were no models of other tribal education codes. Since the Code has been enacted, a few other tribes have adopted education codes or plans. RJS knows of no other tribal education code that is as comprehensive or as far along in implementation as that of the RST.

2. The collaborative Code development process has facilitated Code implementation

The Code development process included a large network established by the TEC and TED of tribal and non-tribal officials, educators, and parents. The network provided input and communication. The TEC and TED hosted discussion and drafting sessions with schools and other educational institutions on key Code sections. Though time and resource consuming, this development process was intended to directly and extensively involve entities and individuals affected by the Code and help set the stage for cooperative and collaborative implementation work. This strategy has enabled implementation and helped to avoid disputes over the legal jurisdictional questions regarding Indian education.

3. Most schools and other educational institutions have complied with Code reporting requirements

A major feature of the Code is its reporting requirements, particularly with respect to data on student performance, progress, and needs. Since the Code's inception, most schools and other educational institutions have furnished the requisite data and information to the TED. The data initially provided have become the baselines for improvement. For some schools and years, data is incomplete. Lack of regular data provision or incomplete data hinders the TED's reporting and tracking efforts.

4. Legal jurisdictional questions have hindered implementation of certain Code sections

The **RST** was apprised of the legal complexities and uncertainties surrounding governmental jurisdiction over Indian education. The Code was designed to be implemented in a cooperative and collaborative manner guided by an overall respect for mutual goals of improving the quality of education and educational opportunities for tribal students. Cooperative and collaborative implementation has proved successful and may be the best means of future implementation.

In some instances, however, the lack of legal clarity has hindered timely, full, or effective implementation of certain Code sections such as reporting and tribal curricula. Judicial enforcement of any Code sections against non-members of the **RST** has not been attempted. Resolution of the jurisdictional questions in favor of tribal authority would help Code implementation generally and in the event that cooperation or collaboration break down.

5. The Code lacks prioritization within itself

The Code does not prioritize its provisions. For example, the Code does not direct the **TED** about which of its substantive areas — for example, reporting, tribal curricula, or parental involvement — is the most important, or in what order they should be addressed. Nor should the Code so prioritize, for that likely would be at the expense of needed overall structure and flexibility. However, given the scarcity of financial and staff resources, the **TED** could benefit from a long-range plan that is consistent with the Code. The plan could set and help guide the priorities for future Code implementation.

6. Implementation of Code curriculum and education standards provisions has begun

Most of the implementation of the Code tribal education standards provisions has occurred in the Todd County School District. In 1997, Todd County finalized and adopted Lakota Studies Standards for grades kindergarten through twelve. The tribal education standards development process was a very collaborative effort among the District, the **TED**, and **SGU**. State and national standards were reviewed and then adapted to meet the needs of **RST** students. In the summer of 1998, Todd County began integrating the tribal Lakota Studies Standards into its regular curriculum. The **TED** and Todd County are currently working on the development of tribal Lakota Language Standards.

Work has also begun on the development of tribal Lakota Studies Standards for St. Francis Indian School and White River School District. The process by which the tribal standards for Todd County were developed and the benchmarks used there have proved to be a good model for work at other schools and educational institutions.

7. Impacts on staffing and teacher training have been made by initiatives, not by direct Code provision implementation

Lack of resources have greatly hindered the implementation of Code provisions regarding staffing and teacher training. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the TED worked intensely with SGU to plan and develop tribal teacher recertification courses. Courses were designed in four areas: Indian Studies, Rosebud Lakota History and Culture, Teaching Methodology for Lakota Students, and Teaching the Exceptional Child in the Regular Classroom. The TED secured agreement from the South Dakota Department of Education that these courses would satisfy state teacher recertification requirements. However, tribal teacher recertification work has since laid dormant because no resources have been available to maintain it.

The TED nevertheless has made some impact on staffing and teacher training with initiatives such as the Lakota Language Renewal Project, by providing occasional in service training, and by working with individual schools and other educational institutions to establish tribal educational standards.

8. The Code parental and community involvement provisions have been implemented

The TED has developed Tribal Parenting Education Programs and provides in service training for parents in accordance with the Code. The TED has also participated in the development of School Improvement Councils at Todd County, St. Francis, and White River schools that are comprised primarily of tribal parents. It is not expected that compliance or enforcement of these Code provisions will be a problem in the future. However, this is a substantive area of the Code that could benefit from clarification with respect to enforcement or recourse if compliance became an issue in the future.

9. The Code provisions on alcohol and substance abuse prevention education have not been implemented

Virtually no implementation of Code provisions has occurred in this area due to a lack of resources. The TED has gathered and reviewed the alcohol and drug abuse prevention education policies of some schools and other educational institutions, and has identified the lack of testing and background checks for staff as an area of concern.

10. The Code lacks specific provisions regarding early childhood education

While "early childhood programs" are within the definition of "other educational institutions" regulated by the Code, there is no specific Code section on early childhood education. For several reasons this omission seems curious. Education and nurturing of children in their early years after birth is very much a part of Lakota tradition. The RST has

long operated a Head Start Program which, in 1998, received national recognition as one of the Top Ten Head Start Programs in the country. Significant resources have been obtained for tribal Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Programs.

C. The TED and Code have Positively and Substantially Impacted Educational Opportunities for Tribal Students

Since enactment of the Code, the graduation rates for students in grades nine through twelve have increased at Todd County from 48% to 72% and at St. Francis from 24% to 69%. At the same time, the drop-out rates for students in these grades have decreased at Todd County from 11% to 7.6% and at St. Francis from 36.5% to 7%. Also during this same period, there have been modest improvements in the attendance rates for students in grades nine through twelve at both Todd County and St. Francis. This data is displayed by tables and graphs on the following pages in this Part of this evaluation.

While this data is not limited to tribal students, the percentages of tribal students in these schools are 90% (Todd County) and 99% (St. Francis). The RST has made a priority of addressing student attendance and the correlative drop-outs and graduations directly through the TIP. Indeed, the data shows that from 1989 to 1993, improvements in drop-out and graduation rates at Todd County and St. Francis were modest. Since the inception of the TIP in FY 1994, the changes have been substantial. Interviews with schools and other educational institutions for this evaluation confirmed that the TIP and other TED efforts have helped in this area. The data and interviews lead to the conclusion that these improvements in educational opportunities are attributable to TED operations and Code implementation.

D. The TED and Code have Not Impacted the Quality of Education for Tribal Students To Date

As shown by the tables and graphs on the following pages, since enactment of the Code, reported achievement scores for Todd County, St. Francis, and White River schools have changed little. This leads to a conclusion that the TED and Code have had virtually no impact on tribal student education quality. However, increases in attendance are necessary for improvements in achievement. Additionally, achievement is less subject to direct tribal control than attendance. Nevertheless, key sections of the Code such as tribal curricula and teacher training are aimed at improving achievement levels, but they have yet to be implemented. Todd County has only recently adopted and integrated tribal education standards in Lakota Studies. It is far too soon to conclude what impact the TED and Code could have on educational quality for tribal students if given the time and chance

Todd County High School Student Performance Indicators 1989-1998					
Year	Drop-Out Rate	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	11 th Grade Achievement (NCE)	
				Reading	Math
1989-90	11%	89%	48%	42.5	43.0
1990-91	15%	87%	52%	37.0	40.0
1991-92	14%	88%	47%	39.0	39.0
1992-93	11%	81%	42%	32.0	29.0
1993-94	12%	89%	51%	37.0	31.0
1994-95	7.3%	90%	62%	40.0	43.0
1995-96	6%	91%	61%	39.2	42.8
1996-97	No Information On File				
1997-98	7.6%	97%	72%	40.5	39.7

Source: School Reported Data

St. Francis High School Student Performance Indicators 1989-1998					
Year	Drop-Out Rate	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	11 th Grade Achievement (NCE)	
				Reading	Math
1989-90	36.5%	72%	24%	18.0	19.0
1990-91	32%	67%	27%	26.1	30.9
1991-92	48%	74%	31%	29.5	31.9
1992-93	14.7%	79%	42%	23.0	20.0
1993-94	12.8%	77%	52%	32.7	28.9
1994-95	24.3%	74%	61%	36.5	47.1
1995-96	No Information On File	79%	67%	43.6	16.0
1996-97	No Information On File				
1997-98	7%	78%	69%	37.8	12.6

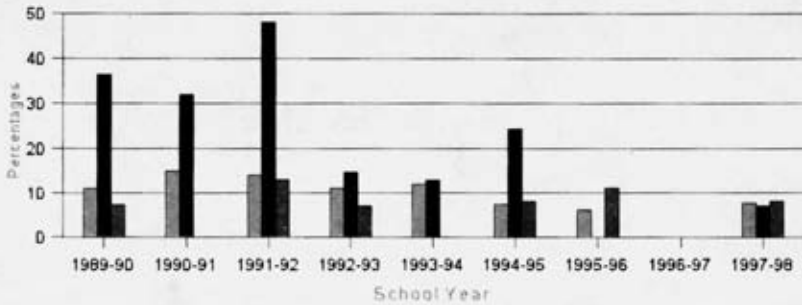
Source: School Reported Data

White River High School Student Performance Indicators 1989-1998					
Year	Drop-Out Rate	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	11 th Grade Achievement (NCE)	
				Reading	Math
1989-90	7.2%	95.5%	62%	43.0	40.0
1990-91	No Information On File				
1991-92	13%	94%	66%	No Information On File	
1992-93	7%	93%	74%	29.0	45.0
1993-94	No Information On File				
1994-95	8%	88%	61%	38.0	54.0
1995-96	11%	91.6%	54%	48.3	40.1
1996-97	No Information On File				
1997-98	8%	98%	64%	47.8	52.5

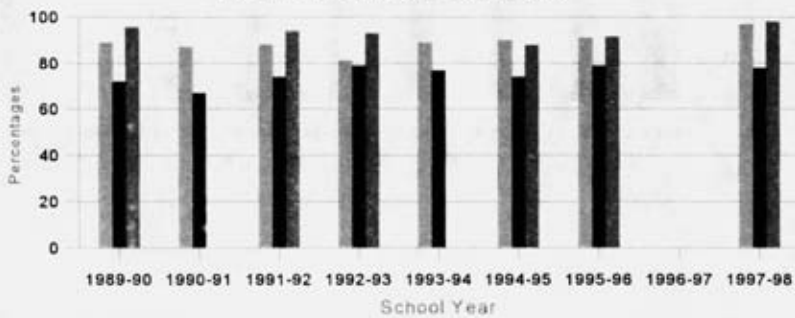
Source: School Reported Data

HIGH SCHOOL

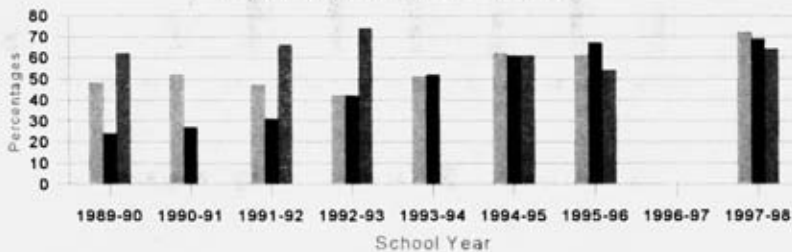
DROP-OUT RATES



ATTENDANCE RATES



GRADUATION RATES



Todd County



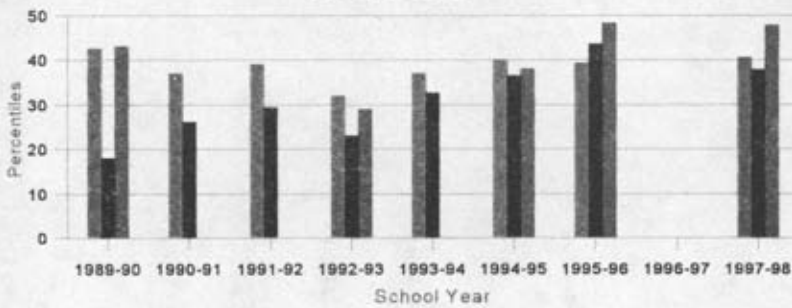
St. Francis



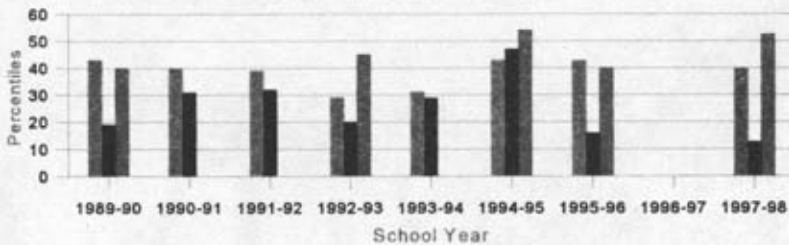
White River

11TH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT (NCE)

READING



MATH



Todd County
 St. Francis
 White River

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. The stable funding for core TED operations needs to increase so that Code implementation and student performance impacts can be expanded.
- B. The TED should continue moving tribal gaming revenues into Code implementation-type expenditures such as language restoration.
- C. Annual funding should be obtained for publishing the SRE report. Data from schools and other educational institutions should be standardized. All schools and other educational institutions should provide full data annually.
- D. For direction and accountability, the TED should develop a long-range operations plan with goals, scheduled actions steps, and performance measures.
- E. While continuing the present approach to Code implementation, the RST also should be prepared for break downs in cooperation and collaboration and legal challenges to tribal authority.
- F. The RST should continue to obtain legal advice on questions regarding tribal jurisdiction in education and Code compliance mechanisms.
- G. Education initiatives should be used as models for implementing Code provisions on tribal curricula and teacher recertification.
- H. The RST should be prepared to enforce compliance with the Code parental and community involvement provisions if they are challenged by parents, schools, or other educational institutions.
- I. The RST should take advantage of existing initiatives and funding for pre-school and related parenting programs by amending the Code to include a separate early childhood section.
- J. The RST should implement the Code provisions on alcohol and substance abuse prevention education as resources become available, and amend the Code to require drug and alcohol testing and background checks for employees of schools and other educational institutions.

- K. The RST should build on its demonstrated success in reducing tribal student drop-out rates and increasing attendance and graduation rates and begin efforts to increase student academic attainment and achievement levels.
- L. For future external monitoring and assessment, models, standards, and analyses for tribal education departments and codes should be developed, reviewed, and refined.

ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FUNDING SOURCES (in thousands of dollars)										
	FY90	FY91	FY92	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
Tribal Revenues Unrestricted	\$ 30	\$ 93	\$ 75	\$ 67	\$ 67	\$ 67	\$ 67	\$ 67	\$ 72	\$ 78
Tribal Gaming Revenues*						\$250	\$390	\$130	\$225	\$167
General Indian Self-Determination Act Funds for Tribes ('638 - TPA)					\$ 33	\$ 62	\$ 79	\$100	\$113	\$113
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Funds					\$ 7.6	\$167	\$372	\$497	\$680	\$947

* Restricted to clothing, scholarships, student travel, language restoration (FY98 & FY99), the Rosebud Alternative Program (FY99), graduation or school projects

APPENDIX